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Isaiah 8:20

The Fundamentals

A Testimony to the Truth

Volume V

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FOREWORD

The favor with which "The Fundamentals" has been received all over the world is a great gratification to those who are engaged in the work; and the opposition, bordering sometimes on bitterness, which it has provoked, has been also very gratifying.

The favor is from those who believe in the fundamentals of Christianity; and the opposition is, in the main, from the religious people who have really ceased to be Christian in their faith, while, for some reason, they desire to retain the label of Christianity. The fact that they have been reached and led to think is cause for thanksgiving.

This volume goes to more than 275,000 pastors, evangelists, missionaries, theological professors, theological students, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, Y. W. C. A. secretaries, Sunday School superintendents, religious editors and Roman Catholic priests in the English speaking world.

We earnestly request all Christians who read this to pray that the Word of God may continue to "run and be glorified," that the unbelief, which in pulpit and pew has been paralyzing the Church of Christ, may be overcome, and that a world-wide revival may be the result.

(See Publishers' Notice, Page 125.)

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THE FUNDAMENTALS

VOLUME V

CHAPTER I

LIFE IN THE WORD

BY PHILIP MAURO, ATTORNEY AT LAW, NEW YORK CITY

INTRODUCTION

It must be evident to all who pay close attention to the spiritual conditions of our day that there is being made at this time a very determined and widespread effort to set aside entirely the *authority* of the Bible. Let us note that one of the unique characteristics of that Book is that it claims the right to control the actions of men. It speaks "as one *having* authority." It assumes, and in the most peremptory and uncompromising way, to rebuke men for misconduct, and to tell them what they shall do and what they shall not do. It speaks to men, not as from the human plane, or even from the standpoint of superior human wisdom and morality; but as from a plane far above the highest human level, and as with a wisdom which admits of no question or dispute from men. It demands throughout unqualified submission.

But this assumption of control over men is a direct obstacle to the democratic spirit of the times, which brooks no authority higher than that of "the people," that is to say, of Man himself. To establish and to make universal the principles of pure democracy is the object, whether consciously or unconsciously, of the great thought-movements of our era; and the essence and marrow of democracy is the supreme authority of Man. Hence the conflict with the Bible.

Not only is the Bible, with its peremptory assertion of supremacy and control over mankind, directly counter to the democratic movement, but it is now the *only* real obstacle to

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the complete independence of humanity. If only the authority of the Scriptures be gotten rid of, mankind will have attained the long-coveted state of absolute independence, which is equivalent to utter lawlessness.

The state of ideal democracy would be accurately described as "lawlessness," since it is manifest that an individual or a society which is under no restraint except such as is self-imposed, is really under no restraint at all. To attain this ideal state is the end and purpose of present day movements; and, in order to promote these movements, that mighty spiritual intelligence who is designated "the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2) very wisely, and with consummate subtlety, directs the attack, from many different quarters, against the authority of the Bible.

The great mass of men, including the majority of the leaders of the age, are already completely absorbed in the activities of the world and utterly indifferent to the claims of the Bible. As to these, it is only necessary to take care that they are not aroused from their indifference. But the Bible nevertheless, by reason of its hold upon the consciences of the few, exerts, upon society as a whole, a mighty restraining influence, against which the assaults of the enemies of truth are now being directed.

In some quarters the authority of the Bible is directly assailed and its Divine origin disputed in the name of "Science" and of "Scholarship." Much of the learning and theological activity of the day are concentrated upon the attempt to discredit the Bible, and to disseminate views and theories directly at variance with its claims of divine inspiration and authority.

In other quarters the attack takes the form of a pretense of conceding the inspiration of the Bible, coupled with the claim that other writers and other great literary works were equally inspired. "God is not limited," we are told, "and can speak to man, and does speak to man, in our day, in like manner as in the days of Moses, Isaiah, or Paul."

Manifestly it makes practically no difference whether the Bible be dragged down to the level of other books, or other books be exalted to the level of the Bible. The result is the same in both cases; namely, that the unique authority of the Bible is set aside.

But even in quarters where the Divine origin of the Bible is fully recognized, the enemy is actively at work with a view to weakening its influence. There is much teaching abroad (heard usually in connection with certain spiritual manifestations which have become quite common of late) to the effect that those who have the Spirit dwelling in them, and speaking directly to and through them, are independent of the Word of God. This is the form which the idea of a continuing revelation takes in quarters where a direct attack on the authority of Scripture would fail. But the result is the same.

In such a state of things it is manifestly of the very highest importance to insist unceasingly upon the sufficiency, finality and completeness of the Revelation given by God in His Word. With the desire to serve this purpose, even though it be in a very small degree, these pages are written. It would be, however, a task far beyond the capacity of the writer to present all the unique characteristics of the Bible, whereby it is so distinguished from other books that it occupies a class by itself. The writer has, therefore, singled out for consideration one special attribute or characteristic of the Holy Scriptures; namely, that signified by the word "living."

If one is able to apprehend, however feebly, the tremendous fact that the Word of God is a LIVING Word, such knowledge will go far towards affording him protection from what is perhaps the greatest danger of these "perilous times."

I. THE INCARNATE WORD, AND THE WRITTEN WORD: BOTH ARE "LIVING"

Of the many statements which the Bible makes concerning the Word of God, none is more significant, and surely none is

of greater importance to dying men, than the statement that the Word of God is a LIVING Word.

In Philippians 2:16 we have the expression, "The Word of Life." The same expression occurs in 1 John 1:1. It is here used of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, whereas in Philippians it is apparently the Written Word that is spoken of. The Written Word and the Incarnate Word are so identified in Scripture that it is not always clear which is referred to. The same things are said of each, and the same characters attributed to each. The fundamental resemblance lies in the fact that each is the revealer or tangible expression of the Invisible God. As the written or spoken word expresses, for the purpose of communicating to another, the invisible and inaccessible thought, so Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Word, and the Holy Scriptures as the Written Word, express and communicate knowledge of the invisible and inaccessible God. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me" (John 14:9,11).

In Hebrews 4:12 we find the statement that "The Word of God is LIVING and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (R. V.). Clearly this refers to the Written Word. But the very next verse, without any change of subject, directs our attention to the Searcher of hearts (Rev. 2:23), saying, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Again in 1 Peter 1:23 we read of "the Word of God which liveth," or more literally, "the Word of God living." Here again there might be uncertainty as to whether the Incarnate Word or the Written Word be meant; but it is generally understood that the latter is in view, and the quotation from Isaiah 40:6-8 would confirm this idea.

From these passages we learn that the Word of God is spoken of as a "living" Word. This is a very remarkable

statement, and is worthy of our closest examination and most earnest consideration. Why is the Word of God thus spoken of? Why is the extraordinary property of LIFE, or vitality, attributed to it? In what respects can it be said to be a living Word?

But the expression "living," as applied to the Word of God, manifestly means something more than partaking of the kind of life with which we are acquainted from observation. God speaks of Himself as the "Living God." The Lord Jesus is the "Prince of Life." (Acts 3:15.) He announced Himself to John in the vision of Patmos as "He that liveth." Eternal life is in Him. (1 John 5:11.)

It is clear, then, that when we read, "The Word of God is living," we are to understand thereby that it lives with a spiritual, an inexhaustible, an inextinguishable, in a word a divine, life. If the Word of God be indeed living in this sense, then we have here a fact of the most tremendous significance. In the world around us the beings and things which we call "living" may just as appropriately be spoken of as "dying." What we call "the land of the living" might better be described as the land of the dying. Wherever we look we see that death is in possession, and is working according to its invariable method of corruption and decay. Death is the real monarch of this world, and we meet at every turn the gruesome evidence and results of the universal sway of him who has "the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "Death reigned" (Rom. 5:17), and still reigns over everything. The mighty and awful power of death has made this earth of ours a great burying ground—a gigantic cemetery.

Can it be that there is an exception to this apparently universal rule? Is there, indeed, in this world of dying beings, where the forces of corruption fasten immediately upon everything into which life has entered, and upon all the works of so-called living creatures, one object which is really LIVING, an object upon which corruption cannot fasten

itself, and which resists and defies all the power of death? Such is the assertion of the passages of Scripture which we have quoted. Surely, then, if these statements be true, we have here the most astounding phenomenon in all the accessible universe; and it will be well worth while to investigate an object of which so startling an assertion is seriously, if very unobtrusively, made.

Before we proceed with our inquiry let us note one of many points of resemblance between the Incarnate Word and the Written Word. When "the Word was made flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us" (John 1:14), there was nothing in His appearance to manifest His Deity, or to show that "in Him was life" (John 1:4). That fact was demonstrated, not by His blameless and unselfish behavior, nor by His incomparable teachings and discourses, but by His *resurrection from the dead*. The only power which is greater than that of death is the power of life. He had, and exercised, that power, and holds now the keys of death and of hades. (Rev. 1:18, R. V.)

Similarly, there is nothing in the appearance and behavior (so to speak) of the Bible to show that it has a characteristic, even divine life, which other books have not. It bears the same resemblance to other writings that Jesus, the son of Mary, bore to other men. It is given in human language just as He came in human flesh. Yet there is between it and all other books the same difference as between Him and all other men, namely, the difference *between the living and the dying*. "The word of God is living."

It will require, therefore, something more than a hasty glance or a casual inspection to discern this wonderful difference; but the difference is there, and with diligence and attention we may discover some clear indications of it.

II. NO DEFINITIONS OF LIFE

Man's wisdom and learning are incapable of furnishing a definition of life. The attempts of the wisest and most learned

to furnish such a definition only serve to exhibit the futility of the attempt.

Herbert Spencer, who has made the most ambitious attempt of modern times to explain the visible universe, gives this as the result of his best efforts to define life: "Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations."

This definition manifestly stands as much in need of explanation as that which it purports to explain. But it will serve at least to remind us that the wisdom of men is foolishness with God.

Another eminent man of science defined life as "the twofold internal movement of composition and decomposition, at once general and continuous."

These modern definitions are scarcely an improvement upon that of Aristotle, who defined life as "the assemblage of the operations of nutrition, growth, and destruction."

What a marvellous thing is life, and how far it transcends the comprehension of man, since his best efforts to define it give results so ridiculously inadequate!

The ignorance of scientific men on this subject is frankly confessed by Alfred Russell Wallace, who in one of his latest books, "Man's Place in the Universe," says, "Most people give scientific men credit for much greater knowledge than they possess in these matters." And again: "As to the deeper problems of life, and growth, and reproduction, though our physiologists have learned an infinite amount of curious and instructive facts, they can give us *no intelligible* explanation of them."

But, if none of us can say what life is, we can all distinguish between that which is living (even in the ordinary sense of the word) and that which is not living; and our best idea of the meaning of life is obtained by comparing that which has life (whether animal or vegetable) with that which has not life, as minerals, or any non-living matter. We know that between

the two there is a great gulf, which only divine power can span; for it is only the living God who can impart life to that which is lifeless.

We look then at the Written Word of God to see if it manifests characteristics which are found only in living things, and to see if it exhibits, not merely the possession of life of the perishable and corruptible sort with which we are so familiar by observation, and which is in each of us, but life of a different order, imperishable and incorruptible.

III. PERENNIAL FRESHNESS

The Bible differs radically from all other books in its perpetual freshness. This characteristic will be recognized only by those who know the Book in that intimate way which comes from living with it, as with a member of one's family. I mention it first because it was one of the first *unique* properties of the Bible which impressed me after I began to read it as a believer in Christ. It is a very remarkable fact that the Bible never becomes exhausted, never acquires sameness, never diminishes in its power of responsiveness to the quickened soul who comes to it. The most familiar passages yield as much (if not more) refreshment at the thousandth perusal, as at the first. It is indeed as a fountain of living water. The fountain is the same, but the water is always fresh, and always refreshing. We can compare this to nothing but what we find in a living companion, whom we love and to whom we go for help and fellowship. The person is always the same, and yet without sameness. New conditions evoke new responses; and so it is with the Bible. As a living Book it adapts itself to the new phases of our experience and the new conditions in which we find ourselves. From the most familiar passage there comes again and again *a new message*; just as our most familiar friend or companion will have something new to say, as changed conditions and new situations require it from time to time.

This is true of no other book. What man's book has to say we can get the first time; and the exceptions arise merely from lack of clearness on the writer's part, or lack of apprehension on the part of the reader. Man can touch only the surface of things, and he cares only about surface appearances. So, in all his writings, whatever substance they contain lies on the surface, and can be gathered by a capable reader at once. If the Word of God may be compared in this particular to a living person, the books of men may be compared to pictures or statues of living persons. However beautifully or artistically executed, a single view may readily exhaust the latter, and a second and third look will be mere repetitions. The difference is that which exists between the living and the dead. The Word of God is **LIVING**.

But while the Bible resembles in this important respect a living person, who is our familiar, sympathetic, and responsive companion, it differs from such a human companion in that the counsel, comfort, and support it furnishes are far above and beyond what any human being can supply; and the only explanation of this is that the source of its life and powers is not human, but **Divine**.

IV. THE BIBLE DOES NOT BECOME OBSOLETE

One of the most prominent characteristics of books written by men for the purpose of imparting information and instruction is that they very quickly become obsolete, and must be cast aside and replaced by others. This is particularly true of books on science, text-books, school-books and the like. Indeed it is a matter of boasting (though it would be hard to explain why) that "progress" is so rapid in all departments of learning as to render the scientific books of one generation almost worthless to the next. Changes in human knowledge, thought and opinion occur so swiftly, that books, which were the standards yesterday, are set aside today for others, which in turn will be discarded for yet other "authorities" tomorrow. In fact, every

book which is written for a serious purpose begins to become obsolete before the ink is dry on the page. This may be made the occasion of boasting of the great progress of humanity, and of the wonderful advances of "science;" but the true significance of the fact is that man's books are all, like himself, dying creatures.

The Bible, on the other hand, although it treats of the greatest and most serious of all subjects, such as God, Christ, eternity, life, death, sin, righteousness, judgment, redemption—is always the latest, best, and *only* authority on all these and other weighty matters whereof it treats. Centuries of "progress" and "advancement" have added *absolutely nothing* to the sum of knowledge on any of these subjects. The Bible is always fresh and thoroughly "up to date." Indeed it is far, far ahead of human science. Progress cannot overtake it, or get beyond it. Generation succeeds generation, but each finds the Bible waiting for it with its ever fresh and never failing stores of information touching matters of the highest concern, touching *everything* that affects the welfare of human beings.

V. SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

Human teachers and teachings have, indeed, frequently set themselves in opposition to some of the statements of the Bible; and it has often been announced, upon human authority, that errors in history and in matters of science have been detected in the Bible. Some, indeed, have endeavored to save the reputation and authority of the Bible by saying that it was not written to teach men "science." In a sense this is true. The Bible was not written to impart that kind of knowledge which "puffeth up," but just the contrary. It was written to impart that kind of information which takes man down by showing him his true position as a ruined, perishing creature, under the condemnation and power of death, and utterly "without strength," that is to say, incapable of doing *anything* to deliver himself out of this deplorable condition. It declares that, "if any man

think that he knoweth *anything*, he knoweth *nothing* yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor. 8:2). Such is the plain declaration of Scripture as to the limitations of all human knowledge; and he who knows the most is most conscious of these limitations. But if, by the statement that the Bible was not written to teach "science," it be meant that the Bible is unscientific, that statement is not true. On the contrary, the Bible is the only book in the world that is truly "scientific;" for it is the only book which gives precise, accurate and *absolutely reliable* information upon every subject whereof it treats. It is the only book in the world upon *every* statement of which one may safely put implicit confidence. Countless millions have believed the statements of the Word of God, every one of them to his unspeakable advantage, not one of them to his hurt.

We used to hear a great deal, some thirty years ago, about the many "mistakes of Moses," and the errors which "science," with her keen eye, had detected in the Scriptures. But we hear very little today from scientists themselves about the "conflicts between science and religion." These conflicts have, one by one, ceased, as "science" has revised her hasty conclusions and corrected her blunders. The writer has been a diligent student of the physical sciences and of the philosophies based on them, for upwards of twenty-five years, and a practicing lawyer for a still longer period, and having now acquired a fair knowledge of the text of Scripture, he can say that he is aware of no demonstrated fact of science which is in conflict with a single statement of the Bible. Among all the "assured results of science" there exists not, to his knowledge, evidence sufficient in character and amount to convict the Bible of a single error or misstatement. Of course, such evidence could not exist. The Lord Jesus said of the Word of God, "Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17); and of course, true knowledge of God's creation cannot conflict with His Word.

A recent book by Alfred Russel Wallace entitled, "Man's Place in the Universe" (1904), furnishes a striking illustration,

on a large scale, of the way in which "science," after leading the thought of cultured and highly educated minds away from the truth revealed by Scripture, sometimes leads it back again.

The reading of Scripture undoubtedly gives, and was clearly intended to give, the impression that the earth is the center of interest in the universe, and the object of the Creator's special care; that it was fitted with elaborate pains to be the habitation of living creatures, and especially of man; and that the sun, moon and stars were created with special reference to their service to the earth. Hence, for many centuries, man believed that the earth was the center of the universe, and (though the Bible does not say so) that the sun and stars were relatively small bodies which moved around and waited upon it.

But these ideas have been completely upset by the discoveries of modern astronomers, who ascertained, at least to their entire satisfaction, that not only is the sun enormously larger than the earth, but that it is attended by other planets, the largest of which is twelve hundred times larger than the earth. Moreover, it has also been learned, so we are told, that our sun itself is but one of an almost infinite number of stars, many of which are immensely greater in size, and which, it may be assumed, are themselves the centers of planetary systems on a much grander scale than our little solar system.

In such a universe as modern astronomy has brought into the view of man our little earth, once thought to be its center of interest and importance, shrinks into utter insignificance. In proportion to the vast universe of which it is a member its size is relatively less than that of a tiny particle of dust in proportion to the mass of the earth itself. How, therefore, can it be supposed that the Creator of so inconceivably great and complex a universe would have a special regard for this insignificant attendant of a fourth-rate sun, and for the still more insignificant creatures who dwell upon it? The earth with all its occupants could drop out of the universe and be no

more missed than a single grain of sand from the seashore or a single drop of water from the ocean.

It is inevitable that these teachings of astronomy concerning the universe should have produced impressions directly opposite to those produced by Scripture, and should have placed obstacles in the way of believing the doctrine of redemption by the incarnation and sacrificial death of the Son of God.

But now comes Mr. Wallace, the contemporary of Charles Darwin, and probably at the present day one of the most prominent men of science, and reverses the ideas which have been so widely disseminated in the name of science. Mr. Wallace^{*} masses a great body of evidence, derived both from astronomy and physics, to support the propositions, First, that the solar system occupies (and always has occupied) approximately the central portion of this vast universe, getting all the advantages due to such favorable position; Second, that the earth is certainly the only habitable planet in the solar system, and presumably the only habitable spot in the whole universe. Mr. Wallace, by a vast accumulation of facts and inferences, shows that the physical conditions necessary for the maintenance of life depend upon a great variety of complex and delicate adjustments, such as distance from the sun, the mass of the planet, its obliquity to its orbit, the amount of water as compared with land, the surface distribution of land and water, the permanence of this distribution, the density of the earth, the volume and density of the atmosphere, the amount of carbon-dioxide therein, etc. These, and other essential conditions, are met (says Mr. Wallace) only in a planet such as this earth, situated and constructed as it is. From Mr. Wallace's premises, if the universe is assumed to be the work of an intelligent Creator, it would follow that everything in this inconceivably vast and complex universe has been planned and arranged with special reference to making this little earth of ours a place suitable for the habitation of living beings, and especially of mankind.

We give Mr. Wallace's conclusions in his own words. He

says: "*This completes my work as a connected argument, founded wholly upon the facts and principles accumulated by modern science; and it leads, if my facts are substantially correct and my reasoning sound, to one great and definite conclusion,—that man, the culmination of conscious organic life, has been developed HERE ONLY in the whole vast material universe we see around us.*"

Thus we have the surprising fact that one of the foremost living exponents of the teachings of science, a man who certainly attaches no importance to the teachings of Scripture, has been at great pains to show that the earth is, after all, the center of, and most important place in, the whole universe; and that, so far as any purpose can be detected in it, the universe may well be supposed to exist for the sole benefit of the earth, and for the sake of producing therein those peculiar conditions necessary for the existence and maintenance of life.

We may say then that, considered merely as a book of instruction, the Bible is, as to every subject whereof it treats, not merely abreast of, but far ahead of, the learning of these and all other times, whether past or future. The impressions it makes upon believing minds are the impressions of *truth*, even though (as in the instance we have just been considering) contemporary science may give, as its settled conclusions, impressions directly to the contrary.

Unlike other books of instruction THE BIBLE DOES NOT BECOME OBSOLETE. This is a fact of immense significance; and its only explanation is that the Bible is a LIVING book, the Word of the living God. All other books partake of the infirmity of their authors, and are either dying or dead. On the other hand, "The Word of God is living."

VI. THE BIBLE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE

The Bible manifests the possession of inherent and imperishable life in that it survives all the attempts that have been made to destroy it.

The Bible is the only book in the world that is truly hated. The hatred it arouses is bitter, persistent, murderous. From generation to generation this hatred has been kept alive. There is doubtless a supernatural explanation for this continuous display of hostility towards the Word of God, for that Word has a supernatural enemy who has personally experienced its power. (Matt. 4:1-10.)

But the natural explanation of this hatred is that the Bible differs notably from other books in that it gives no flattering picture of man and his world, but just the reverse. The Bible does not say that man is a noble being, ever aspiring towards the attainment of exalted ideals. It does not describe the career of humanity as "progress," as the brave and successful struggle of man against the evils of his environment; but quite the contrary, declares it to be a career of disobedience and departure from God, a preference for darkness rather than for light, "because their deeds are evil."

The Bible does not represent man as having come, without any fault of his own, into adverse circumstances, and as being engaged in gradually overcoming these by the development and exercise of his inherent powers. It does not applaud his achievements, and extol his wonderful civilization. Quite the contrary. It records how God saw that the *wickedness* of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen. 6:5.) It speaks of man as "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, hateful to God, insolent, proud, vaunting, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, perfidious, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" (Rom. 1:29-31 Gr.). It says that "They are *all* under sin," that "There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable;

there is none that doeth good, no not one" (Rom. 3:10-12). Man's condition by nature is described as "*dead* in trespasses and sins," "children of disobedience; among whom also we *all* had our conduct in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were *by nature* the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:1-3).

The Bible has nothing to say in praise of man or of his natural endowments. On the contrary, it derides his wisdom as "foolishness with God." It declares that God has made foolish the wisdom of this age (1 Cor. 1:20); that the natural man is incapable of receiving the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14); and that if any man thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. (1 Cor. 8:2.)

Nor does the Bible predict the ultimate triumph of "civilization." It does not say that the progress of humanity shall bring it eventually to a vastly better state of things. It does not say that human nature shall improve under the influences of education and self-culture, even with that of Christianity added. On the contrary, it declares that evil men "shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13).

Even of "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4), during which the professing church is the most conspicuous object on earth, and during which the world has the enormous benefit resulting from the light of revelation and an open Bible, it is not predicted that man and his world would undergo any improvement, or that the developments of the age would be in the direction of better conditions on earth. On the contrary, the Bible declares that "in the last days perilous [or difficult] times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, lovers of money, vaunting, proud, evil speakers, disobedient to parents, untruthful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, inconsistent, savage, not lovers of good, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than

lovers of God; having a form of piety, but denying the power of it" (2 Tim. 3:1-5 Gr.).

Such is the character of man, and such is to be the result, as Scripture foretells it, of all his schemes of betterment, education, development, self-culture, civilization and character-building. And because of this the Bible is heartily detested. Men have sought nothing more earnestly than they have sought to destroy this appallingly accurate portrait of themselves and their doings. How astonishing it is that any intelligent person should suppose that man drew this picture of himself, and predicted this as the outcome of all his own efforts! No wonder the Bible is hated, and for the simple and sufficient reason that it declares the truth about man and his world. The Lord Jesus set forth clearly both the fact and its explanation when He said to His unbelieving brethren, "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that *the works thereof are evil*" (John 7:7).

Again, the Bible is hated because it claims the right to exercise, and assumes to exercise, *authority over man*. It speaks as one *having authority*. It issues commands to all. It says, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." It does not simply advise or commend one course of action rather than another, as one would address an equal, but it directs men imperatively what they shall do, and what they shall not do. In this manner it addresses all ranks and conditions of men—kings and governors, parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, rich and poor, high and low, free and bond. In this, too, we have a characteristic of the Bible which distinguishes it from all other books. It is no respecter of persons. But for this cause also it is hated; for men are becoming more and more impatient of all external authority. The principles of democracy, the essence of which is the supremacy (virtually the *divinity*) of man, has thoroughly leavened all society in the progressive nations of the earth. There is a sentiment

abroad, which finds frequent expression and meets always with a sympathetic reception, to the effect that man has been shackled through the ages by narrow theological ideas whereof the Bible is the source, and that the time has arrived for him to throw off this bondage, to arise in his true might and majesty, and to do great things for himself.

It is a most impressive fact that, in all the visible universe, there is nothing that assumes authority over man, or that imposes laws upon him, *except the Bible*. Once thoroughly rid of that troublesome book, and man will be finally rid of all authority, and will have arrived at that state of lawlessness predicted in the New Testament prophecies, wherein society will be ready to accept the leadership of that "lawless one," whose coming is to be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and wonders of falsehood, and with all deceit of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not a love of the truth that they might be saved. (2 Thess. 2:7-10.)

This is perhaps the main purpose of the persistent attempts in our day, mostly in the name of scholarship and liberal theology, to break down the authority of Scripture; and we may see with our own eyes that the measure of success of this great apostasy is just what the Bible has foretold.

Other books arouse no hatred. There may be books which men dislike, and such they simply let alone. But the Bible is, and always has been, hated to the death. It is the *one book* that has been pursued from century to century, as men pursue a mortal foe. At first its destruction has been sought by violence. All human powers, political and ecclesiastical, have combined to put it out of existence. Death has been the penalty for possessing or reading a copy; and such copies as were found have been turned over to the public executioner to be treated as was the Incarnate Word. No expedient that human ingenuity could devise or human cruelty put into effect, has been omitted in the desperate attempt to put this detested

book out of existence. But the concentrated power of man utterly failed in the attempt. Why?

Here is one book among countless millions which is singled out for relentless hatred, and that fact alone is sufficient to provoke astonishment and invite the closest scrutiny to ascertain the explanation of the unique phenomenon. What characteristic is it that distinguishes this Book from all other books in so strange a fashion? Has its influence upon men been corrupting or otherwise evil? Does it teach doctrines dangerous to individuals or communities? Does it promote disorder, vice or crime? On the contrary, it will not be questioned that its influence, wherever it has gone, has been beneficial beyond that of all other books combined, and that the most fruitful human lives are those which have been moulded by its teachings. One explanation alone will account for the astounding fact that such a Book should be the only one now or ever in existence to provoke active and persistent animosity among men who refuse to acknowledge it as from God; namely, that it declares man to be a *fallen* creature, and his whole career to be the mere outworking of his corrupt nature in the path of disobedience; and that it predicts in plain language what the end of that path will be for all who do not accept God's method of deliverance out of it through Jesus Christ.

But, violence having failed to rid man of the Bible, other means have been resorted to in the persistent effort to accomplish that object. To this end the intellect and learning of man have been enlisted. The Book has been assailed from every side by men of the highest intelligence, culture and scholarship. Since the art of printing has been developed there has been in progress a continuous war of books. Many books against THE Book—man's books against God's Book. Its authority has been denied, and its veracity and even its morality have been impugned, its claims upon the consciences of men have been ridiculed; but all to no purpose, except to

bring out more conspicuously the fact that the "Word of God is LIVING," and with an indestructible life.

Should any other book incur the hatred of man (which no other book ever has, seeing that all others are man's own productions) it would not be necessary to take measures for its destruction. A book produced by dying men need only be let alone to die of its own accord. The seeds of death are in it from the start. One Book alone has incurred man's hatred, because it is the one Book that is not his own. It is the only thing *in* the whole world that is hostile *to* the whole world-system. One Book only has man attempted to destroy; and yet, in this attempt, though in it all his powers and resources have been employed, he has most conspicuously and ignominiously failed. Why?

A little less than a century and a half ago a book made its appearance which attracted wide attention, particularly in the upper circles of intellect and culture. It was vauntingly entitled the "Age of Reason," and its author, Thomas Paine, was probably without superior in intelligence among his contemporaries. So confident was the author of this book that his reasonings proved the untrustworthiness of Scripture, and destroyed its claim upon the consciences of men as the revelation of the living God, that he predicted that in fifty years the Bible would be practically out of print. But nearly thrice fifty years have passed since this boast was uttered. The boaster and his book have passed away; and their very names are well-nigh forgotten. But the Word of God has maintained its place, and not by human power. They who believe and cherish it are a feeble folk. Not many wise, not many mighty, not many high-born are among them. They have no might of their own to stand against the enemies of the Bible. The situation resembles a scene recorded in 1 Kings 20:27, where the Israelites went out against the Syrians, and we read that "The children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country."

But notwithstanding such great odds, the victory is certain. The enemies of the Bible have indeed filled the country. Yet, they shall all pass away; but the Word of the Lord shall not pass away.

Again, in more recent times, a book of man was put forth, and was hailed as a work which would quickly destroy the credibility of Scripture and put an end to its authority and influence. This was Charles Darwin's "Descent of Man," a book whose influence has been greater, doubtless, than any other that has made its appearance during a century past. The main feature of this work was that it set forth an explanation of the origin of living beings, including man, radically different from that of Genesis, and propounded a theory of propagation of living species directly contrary to the great and immutable law declared nine times over in the first chapter of the Bible in the brief but significant expression, "after his kind."

The delight which Darwin's book caused among the enemies of the Bible, and the spirit in which its appearance was welcomed, are well illustrated by the title bestowed upon it by the eminent naturalist Haeckel, who called it the "Anti-Genesis," declaring that by a single stroke Darwin had annihilated the dogma of Creation. But it was not because of its supposed contribution to truth that Darwin's book was so widely and cordially received, and his utterly unproved hypothesis so readily accepted as an "assured result of science." Its vogue was largely due to the fact that it struck at the very foundation of Scripture. It is useless to pretend that Darwin's theory might be true, and the Bible nevertheless entitled to respect. The Lord Jesus said to a learned man of His day, "If I have told you *earthly things*, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of *heavenly things*?" (John 3:12). If the Bible does not give us a truthful account of the events of the six days recorded in its first chapter, it is not to be trusted as to *any* of its statements.

But we have now the record of about half a century since the publication of Darwin's book; and, though the great movements of unbelief and apostasy are swiftly running their predicted course, there never was a time when the absolute and divine accuracy of Scripture from beginning to end, was more firmly grasped and tenaciously held by those who know it best, and never a time since "science" began to be looked to as an authority and instructor of men when there was less "scientific" basis for the prevalent questioning of the statements of the Bible.

There can be, of course, no real conflict between the Bible and any true discovery of science. Such conflicts as have been supposed to exist arose from hasty and incorrect conclusions, whose chief value in the eyes of many lay in the fact that they contradicted the Bible. As science has been compelled, however reluctantly, to correct her blunders, or to acknowledge that supposedly demonstrated truths were at best but unproved conjectures, the "conflicts" have died out; so that, at the present time, the assured teachings of "science" afford no weapons against the statements of the Bible. On the contrary, the investigations of men, in fields of geology, physics, and palæontology, have brought into view much information recorded ages ago in the Bible, information which, at the time the latter was written, was not in the knowledge of man. As has been already said, there is not a single assertion of the Bible that is in conflict with any demonstrated fact of science. All the investigations, of all the searchers, in all the various fields of search, have not availed to produce evidence sufficient in character and amount to convict Scripture of a single false statement.

But it is time to bring to a close our remarks under this heading, though they might be greatly extended.

We have called attention to the strange fact that, of all the millions of books that have existed, the Bible is the only one that has excited deep and persistent hatred, the only Book

which men have sought to get rid of, and that by every conceivable means. We have further called attention to the still stranger fact that, in this attempt to destroy the Bible, the powers of state, of religion, and of learning, have all been enlisted, and that, nevertheless, the number of copies of the Bible goes on steadily increasing. How can these facts be explained except by the statement that "the Word of God is LIVING," and that the source of its life is beyond the reach of man—in the very Being of the Living God?

VII. THE BIBLE IS A DISCERNER OF HEARTS

The power of discernment belongs only to an intelligent living being; and the power of discernment possessed by man does not go beneath the surface of things. Yet the passage in Hebrews, already quoted (4:12), asserts that the Word of God is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

This is a very remarkable statement, yet it is true, and millions of men have felt and recognized the searching and discerning power of the Word of God. We go to it not so much to learn the thoughts of other men, as to learn our own thoughts. We go to other books to find what was in the hearts and minds of their authors; but we go to this Book to find what is in our own hearts and minds. To one who reads it with ever so little spiritual intelligence, there comes a perception of the fact that this Book understands and knows all about him. It lays bare the deepest secrets of his heart, and brings to the surface of his consciousness, out of the unfathomable depths and unexplorable recesses of his own being, "thoughts and intents" whose existence was unsuspected. It reveals man to himself in a way difficult to describe, and absolutely peculiar to itself. It is a faithful mirror which reflects us exactly as we are. It detects our motives, discerns our needs; and having truthfully discovered to us our true selves, it counsels, reproves, exhorts, guides, refreshes, strengthens, and illuminates.

It has been pointed out that the Greek word rendered "discerner" in Hebrews 4:12, means literally "critic" (*kritikos*), and that this is its only occurrence in Scripture. How very significant is it that the designation "higher critics" has been assumed by that little coterie of men who claim to be able, by their own powers of literary discernment, to assign the dates of production of books and parts of books of Scripture, to detect spurious passages, alleged interpolations, and the like, and to split up books into fragments, assigning bits to one imaginary author and other bits to another; whereas as a matter of fact, it is the Bible itself that is the "Critic" of men.

This is in keeping with the subversive principles of this present evil age, wherein man is seeking to put himself in the place of God. This is "man's day." Man is now the critic of everything, and particularly of God's Word. Of that he is a "*higher critic*."

There is, however, no external evidence to support the higher critical views as to the late origin of the Pentateuch, Daniel, the latter part of Isaiah, etc.; *per contra* every pertinent discovery in the ruins of ancient cities corroborates the statements of Scripture. These theories rest entirely upon the alleged intuitive perceptions of sinful men, compassed about by infirmity, who claim to be able to pass infallibly upon the style and contents of each book of the Bible, to decide when it was written, by whom it could not have been written, and even to divide it up into various portions, assigning each to a different "source."

But high scholarship is not incompatible with belief in the full inspiration and accuracy of Scripture. Dean Burgon, one of the famous scholars of Oxford, says:

"I must be content with repudiating, in the most unqualified way, the notion that a mistake of any kind whatever is consistent with the texture of a narrative inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

"The Bible is none other but the Word of God, not some part of it more and some part of it less so, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, absolute, faultless, unerring, supreme—'The witness of God which He hath testified of His Son.'"

The time is at hand when the haughtiness of man shall be brought low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Then the Word of God shall judge the critics.

Meanwhile, the living Word shall continue to be the discerning companion of all who resort to it for the help which is not to be had elsewhere in this world of the dying. In going to the Bible we never think of ourselves as going *back* to a book of the distant past, to a thing of *antiquity*; but we go to it as to a book of the *present*—a living book. And so indeed it is, living in the power of an endless life, and able to build us up and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. (Acts 20:32.)

VIII. THE TRANSLATABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

The Word of God manifests itself as a living Word in the very unique property it has of adapting itself and its message to all peoples, and of speaking in all languages, tongues and dialects. The extreme mobility and adaptability of Scripture, as manifested in this way, is comparable only to the power which a living being has of making himself at home in different countries from that in which he was born.

We have here again a characteristic which distinguishes the Bible from all other books, as any one may, with a little attention, clearly perceive. It is a universal rule that a book does not thrive except in the language in which it was written. Men's books will not always bear translation; and the greater the literary value of a book the more it is likely to suffer loss in being translated from one language into another. Change of locality is, to the great majority of books, absolutely destructive.

But to this rule the Bible is a marvellous exception. It seems to run freely into the mould of every language, to adapt itself perfectly thereto, and to speak with equal directness, clearness and authority to all peoples and tribes and nations, in their mother tongue. It does not occur to us that, in reading our common English Bible, we are reading a translation of an Oriental book; and indeed, when an example of the purest and best English is desired, men go with one accord to the Bible.

Considered merely as a poem, there is nothing more exquisite in the English language than the Twenty-third Psalm; and it has been stated that in other languages besides English this Shepherd Psalm is a model of poetical excellence. It never occurs to one reading it that he is reading a translation from another and very different language.

Is not this indeed a very extraordinary fact, and the more so when we consider that the Bible, though a unit, is at the same time highly composite? It comprises specimens of every kind of literature, historical, poetical, biographical, didactic, prophetic, epistolary, etc.

Moreover, it is not the production of a single human being, clothed in a uniform literary style of dress. On the contrary, its several parts were penned by men in widely varying stations in life, from herdsmen and unlearned fishermen, to kings and statesmen; and its styles are as divergent as its writers.

Nor was it the product of one era or period, which would tend to impart some common characteristics, and to prevent wide divergencies. As much as fifteen hundred years elapsed between the writing of its first and its last pages. Yet all parts and styles alike accommodate themselves to the change of language far more readily and perfectly than any human being is able to do when acquiring another tongue.

The property we are now considering is the more remarkable when we consider also the nation from which this unique

volume has come. The Jews were anything but a literary people. They were not at all remarkable for culture, learning, art, or philosophy; and they were quite cut off by their peculiar customs, traditions, and religious institutions, from the progressive nations around them. There is no other Jewish literature that is worth talking about. Yet, from such a people has come a volume whose sixty-six books, now that we have them all together, evidently constitute one complete structure, unitary in design, yet which was fifteen centuries in attaining its completed state. This book, after the Jewish people were disintegrated and scattered,—even as that very book had distinctly foretold,—and had become the most despised and persecuted people on earth, has entered into the place of supremacy in every nation which has attained to any degree of civilization, and has held that place without a rival for eighteen centuries, during which period of time every *human* institution has been overturned, not once only, but again and again.

Why is it that the universal Book did not have its origin in the literature of Greece, or of ancient Rome, or in the Elizabethan epoch of English literature? Why is it that nations which have been famed for their culture and literary genius have produced nothing comparable to the Bible? What collection of sixty-six books from the writings of about thirty authors of any nation could be made that would present any of the characteristics we have been noticing? Yet, it is certain that, if the Bible had a natural, instead of a supernatural origin, it would be far surpassed by the literary product of the literary nations of the earth.

This property of adaptability to all languages and peoples will impress us still more if we compare it in this respect with other Oriental books. The mere fact that it *is* an Oriental book makes its career among the Occidental nations still more miraculous. All attempts to domesticate other Oriental books, particularly sacred books, have been complete failures. Other

Oriental books are sought by scholars only, or by others who have a special interest for inquiring into their contents.

Already the Bible, or portions of it, has been translated into upwards of four hundred languages and dialects; so that it is revealing the grace of God in the gift of His Son, to practically every nation, kindred, tongue and tribe, throughout the world, and is speaking to all peoples *in their own native tongues*.

Like a living person, the Bible has made its way into all lands, has adapted itself to all environments, entered into relations of the most intimate kind with all peoples, and has exerted upon them all its own unique influence. It makes no difference what the people are to whom it goes, how radically different all their customs and institutions from those of that very peculiar people Israel; the Bible makes itself perfectly at home, and takes its own place without delay. Can this, or anything remotely approaching it, be said of any other book? And if not, are we not compelled, if we would have an explanation of this extraordinary difference, to fall back upon the statement that the "Word of God is living"? No other explanation will account for any of the facts we have been considering. This explanation accounts for them all.

The fact we are here considering, that is to say, the career of the Bible among the peoples of the earth, is, indeed, a stupendous and continuing miracle. Why has this particular Book gone to the ends of the earth, and assumed everywhere, and maintained against all opposition, the place of supremacy? What has given to this collection of writings, coming from an insignificant, peculiar, narrow-minded and isolated people, its *universal* character? Why is it that all other books, or collections of books, including the productions of the mightiest intellects and embodying the most superb and lofty specimens of human thought, wisdom, learning and experience, have been narrowly circumscribed in their area of influence, both as to time and space? Why has this particular Book continued ever

widening its sphere of influence as the centuries pass, while every other book, after its first vogue, steadily contracts and dwindles? Why does this Book increase while all others decrease?

There is no *natural* explanation for these remarkable facts. In this day, when a natural explanation is sought for all things, the wise men can advance no theory to account for these facts. We sometimes hear, from the enemies of the truth, the admission that the Bible is inspired, but coupled with the statement that other books are equally inspired. For example, a prominent preacher in New York city recently said in an article published in a popular magazine, "God spake to Abraham, and to Samuel and to Isaiah. He has spoken to Henry Ward Beecher, to Tennyson, and to Ruskin." But neither this prominent preacher, nor any other man who is trying in like manner to put the Word of God on the same level as other books, is able to tell us why the writings of these other "inspired" men do not afford some indications of their divine origin similar to those characteristics of the Bible to which we are now calling attention.

The Apostle Paul in the last of his writings (2 Tim. 2: 8, 9) said, "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel; wherein I suffer as an evil-doer even unto bonds; but the *word of God is not bound*."

In these words we have the sufficient and the only explanation of the extraordinary and unique career of the Bible. The human custodian of the Word of God may be bound, and may be treated as a malefactor for merely being the bearer of the message; but the living Word of the living God is not, and cannot be, bound. Jehovah Himself has said, "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth. It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

But there is more to be noted under this heading. The Bible is the universal Book also in that it not only speaks to all peoples in their own mother tongue, but it addresses itself to all classes of society. Missionaries from every part of the world have reported how the most depraved, ignorant and vicious people will listen at once to the words of Scripture as to no other book, and will recognize them as "good words." Like God Himself His Word is no respecter of persons. Indeed, its sternest denunciations are addressed to persons of rank and of social, ecclesiastical, or political prominence. Its best promises are for the meek and lowly. It has a message for all men, and to the highest as well as the lowest it speaks "with authority," never exhorting from the standpoint merely of superior human wisdom and intelligence, but always as delivering the message of God.

The Bible adapts itself thus to successive generations of men, exhibiting to each individual human being an intimate knowledge of his characteristics, trials and needs. It seems to be waiting for an opportunity to become acquainted with each child of Adam, to direct the steps of his life-journey through this great and terrible wilderness, to warn him of dangers and pitfalls, and to be the man of his counsel to every one who wills not to reject its offer of fellowship. Does not this warrant us in saying that "the Word of God is *LIVING*"?

IX. THE WORD EXHIBITS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF GROWTH

Growth is one of the characteristics of a living being. The Word of God lodges and grows in human hearts, for there is its real lodgment, rather than in the printed page. The Psalmist says, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart" (Ps. 119:11).

The book of Deuteronomy has much to say about the Word of God. In chapter thirty it declares (verse 14) that "The Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart."

This is repeated in Romans 10:8, with the addition, "that is, the word of faith which we preach."

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 Paul says to the Thessalonians, "When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which *effectually worketh also in you* that believe." The believing heart is its lodgment, and there it works to effect some definite results.

In Colossians 3:16 we have the admonition, "Let the word of Christ dwell *in you* richly in all wisdom." It is in the believing heart that the Word dwells richly.

The Lord Jesus, in explaining the parable of the sower, said, "The seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11); and again, "The sower soweth *the Word*" (Mark 4:14). (A seed, of course, is worthless except it have life in it.) And He further explained that the seed which fell on good ground "are they which, *in an honest and good heart*, having heard the Word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). To the unbelieving Jews the Lord said, "And ye have not His Word *abiding in you*; for whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not" (John 5:38).

In Colossians 1:5, 6, Paul speaks of the "Word of the truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit."

In these passages we have presented to us the thought of the Word as a living seed or germ, first finding lodgment in the heart of man, and then abiding and growing there.

The growth of the Word of God is specifically mentioned in several striking passages in the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 6:7: "*And the Word of God increased*; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

Here we are told specifically that the Word of God increased. We learn from this that the mere multiplication of copies of the Scriptures is in itself of no importance. It is of no avail to have the Book in the house, and on the shelf

or table, if it be not taken into the heart. But when so received into the heart, the Word of God grows and increases. It is assimilated into the life of him who receives it, and henceforth is a part of himself.

It is important to note what stimulated this recorded increase of the Word of God. The Apostles, who were its custodians or depositories, had found themselves taken up with ministering to the material wants of the flock, and they brought this matter before the body of disciples saying, "It is not reason that we should leave the *Word of God* and serve tables," and they asked that suitable men be appointed for that service while they should give themselves continually "to prayer and the ministry of the Word."

The growth of the Word then, accompanied by a great multiplication of the number of disciples, was the result of faithful ministry of the Word—a ministry which was sustained by prayer.

This method of promoting the growth of the Word of God is highly important. Every believer, having the Word in his heart and in his mouth, may be and should be the means of its propagation; and the extent to which the Word has been spread abroad in this inconspicuous way will not be known until the time when all things shall be manifested. There are great multitudes who would never get the Word from the printed page, or from the spoken sermon or address. Hence the importance of these epistles of Christ written not with ink, but with the SPIRIT of the living God, not in tablets of stone, but in the fleshy tablets of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:3.) Such epistles are read by many who never read the printed page; and the eternal destiny of many souls may depend upon the distinctness and legibility of that writing. May our lives, as believers, be so transparent that the Word written in our hearts may be distinctly seen; and thus, as sons of God we shall shine "as lights in the world holding forth the Word of life" (Phil. 2:15, 16).

The second passage which speaks expressly of the growth of the Word of God is Acts 12:21-24. In this chapter are narrated the last episodes in the life of Herod Antipas. In the first part of the chapter we read how he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword, and finding this course to be popular with the Jews, he apprehended Peter also, and put him in custody, intending after the passover to make this leader of the Apostles the object of a public demonstration, which doubtless would have strengthened Herod still further in the regard of the people. But Peter was delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord who was sent for that purpose.

The closing verses of the chapter tell of a disagreement between Herod and the citizens of Tyre and Sidon, some undescribed incident having occurred which caused the former to be highly displeased with the latter. But they, having gained the favor of King Herod's chamberlain, one Blastus, made overtures of peace and sent a delegation to the king. The reception of this embassy was made an occasion of much pomp and circumstance. Herod put on his royal apparel, sat upon his throne, received the delegation, "and made an oration unto them." This oration was received with extravagant demonstrations. "The people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."

Herod accepted this tribute, and no doubt was highly pleased therewith. But it is a dangerous thing for mortal and sinful man, however high his station, to accept glory which belongs to God alone. For *immediately* the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was *eaten of worms* and gave up the ghost. "*But the word of God grew and multiplied.*"

There is a tremendous lesson here for the many who, in these closing days of the age, are participating in the various movements which, however diverse in appearance, have all the common object of putting man in the place of God, and the word of man in the place of the Word of God. Herod was

not stricken down for persecuting the Church, for imprisoning Peter, or for putting James to death, nor yet for his previous murder of John the Baptist. He was smitten for permitting his word to be acclaimed as the Word of God. Herod had often heard the Word of the Lord, for he had listened attentively to the preaching of the Baptist. He had heard of the ministry and miracles of the Lord Jesus, and had even seen Him on that dark betrayal night. He was, therefore, not smitten for something done in ignorance.

The angel of Jehovah had two ministries in that chapter. One was to deliver Peter, who, according to the word of his Lord, was to serve Him to old age (John 21:18). The other was to declare, by smiting the King, the difference between the Word of God and that of the most important man of the country.

Doubtless that was a great oration which Herod delivered on that day. It contained most probably striking utterances, pregnant with wisdom and garbed in the attractions of human eloquence. It was, moreover, the King on his throne who spoke, and we know how the throngs gather to listen on such occasions.

On the other hand, and in striking contrast, the Word of God was in the charge of "unlearned and ignorant men," a despised and persecuted company, whose Leader had but just suffered the ignominious death of a malefactor. What then has become of the words of King Herod? All have utterly perished, centuries ago, from the memory of men. He himself was eaten of worms; "But the Word of God grew and multiplied," and has continued so to do from that time to the present.

Not very long ago, at the convening of the American Congress, a message from the President was addressed to that body. Much comment was made on that message because of its great length. Some industrious person counted the words, and found them to be upwards of thirty thousand. They

were serious words, too, and weighty, as human utterances go. They dealt with the most important affairs and interests of the nation that regards itself as the greatest on earth. But they were not "the words of eternal life." And for all that the occasion was so recent, and the subject matter so important, it is doubtful if any person can now recall a single sentence of that great message. Few, indeed, would care to do so, or would receive the slightest benefit therefrom, if they could.

The words of kings, and emperors, and presidents, are dying words. From the moment of their utterance they begin to perish; but "the Word of God is living." Being the utterance of the living God that Word can never pass away.

The last of the three passages which speaks of the growth of the Word of God is in Acts 19; and again the context adds greatly to the impressiveness of the lesson taught by the passage.

The scene of the first of the three incidents was in Jerusalem, of the second in Cæsarea, just west of Galilee, and of the third in Ephesus, a Gentile city. Thus there is special mention made of the growth of the Word of God in Judea, in Palestine outside of Judea, and in the Gentile regions beyond. This would seem to signify that the Word of God was not to be limited to territorial boundary, but was to spread and grow in every part of the earth.

The Apostle Paul had spent two years in Ephesus, preaching to such purpose that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." And God, moreover, "wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (Acts 19:10, 11).

One result of this ministry was that "many of them which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed*" (verses 19, 20).

This is, indeed, a very notable event—a grand demonstration of the power and sufficiency of the Word of God. These books, intrinsically worth so great a sum as fifty thousand pieces of silver, became worse than worthless in the hands of their owners after the latter had received the Word of God. The books thus destroyed had been held in the highest estimation, because they were the manuals of necromancy, or occult arts. They instructed their readers in just such things as are coming into great favor in the present day. But when their owners “believed,” they could no longer practice the “curious arts,” or even retain the books that described them.

It is very easy to destroy the books of men. Great and mighty as are the powers of darkness which were back of the books burned at Ephesus, those evil powers are not comparable to that which has directed the career of the Word of God. Many have been the attempts to consume it in the flames, but in vain; for the Word of God is living.

This scene at Ephesus has been re-enacted in many a human life. When in quest of help, enlightenment, wisdom, guidance, and knowledge of the unseen, men turn to books; and though disappointed again and again, the inquiring mind, which has felt the need of a source of light external to itself, and has realized that there must be such a source somewhere, never shakes off the habit of seeking it in books. There appears to be a deep-seated consciousness that the desired help is to be found in some book. But men cannot impart to the books written by them what is not in themselves; and so they who gather many books gain little to compensate for their cost and labor. Conjectures and human opinions, philosophies and vain deceits, with all the obscurities and contradictions contained in them, do but leave the mind in perplexity and bewilderment concerning every matter of real importance. And, after all, if one cannot have certainties, but must put up with mere opinions, why should he not prefer his own to another man's, seeing that all are at the best but mere guesses,

whereof one is as likely to be true as another? The "wise men" can tell us nothing, for "lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jer. 8:9).

But when, to one who has undergone this weariness of a vain quest for something sure and satisfying in the books of men, the Word of God comes with the convincing power which it alone possesses, and with the restful assurance which it alone can impart, the books of men become worthless—mere rubbish, fit only to be food for flames. Conjectures are now exchanged for certainties, and profitless speculations for knowledge certified by the sure testimony of Him who knoweth and understandeth all things.

The writer lately heard a servant of Christ relate an incident in his own life which aptly illustrates what we have been saying. Speaking on the injunction of Ephesians 6:10, "Be strong in the Lord," he said, "I well remember a section in my book-case long ago which contained a highly prized set of Emerson's works. One essay in particular I read and re-read, and had marked favorite passages in it. The burden of it was, 'Young man, be strong.' This phrase occurred again and again, and it thrilled and excited me. But it pointed me to no source of strength, for the writer knew of none. He never once said, 'Be strong in the Lord;' and the time came when, realizing the cruel mockery of the words, and the emptiness of this entire system of philosophy, I put the set of well-printed and choicely bound volumes into the flames." He discovered in the Bible the Source of all strength, and the Book displaced the entire set of man's philosophies and empty deceits. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

Happy is the man who has "received the Word of God" (Acts 8:14; 11:1, etc.), who has made room for it in his life, and in whose heart and mind it has grown and prevailed.

X. A LIFE-GIVING WORD

We come now to something higher and deeper. The great mystery of a living thing is the power it possesses of propa-

gating its kind. To trace the stream of life to its source is confessedly impossible to man, nor does any philosophic theory account for that stream. The attempt made in recent years to explain life as a mere property of atoms of non-living matter grouped in certain complex combinations, has been confessedly a failure. Professor Huxley, probably the ablest defender of this theory, and who at one time predicted that "protoplasm" (as he named the physical basis of life) might one day be produced in the laboratory, was constrained to admit, before his death, that there was no known link between the living and the non-living.

In the era of great scientific activity which marked the last half of the nineteenth century, many and persistent efforts were made to bring about spontaneous generation; that is to say, to demonstrate that life could be caused by human manipulation to spring up out of non-living matter, and apart from antecedent life. Great was the desire of unbelieving men of science to find a support for this theory, for if established it would flatly contradict the first chapter of the Bible, and thus discredit the statements of the latter upon a subject of the highest importance. In that chapter the first law of biology is enunciated in the words "after his kind;" and this law is applied both to the vegetable kingdom and to the animal—to grass, and herb, and fruit tree, to fowl and fishes, and creeping things, to wild beast and tame beast. Each was commanded to bring forth "after his kind;" and it is needless to say that each has strictly obeyed that Divine command.

The inspired account of Creation does not describe the method whereby God brought into existence the several species of living creatures, and gave to each the distinct characteristics which were to be its perpetual and unvarying endowment. This matter, therefore, belongs to the realm of speculation, into which it is unprofitable to enter. What concerns us is the fact, distinctly stated, and manifestly deemed by the Spirit of God to be of great importance for our instruction in the truth, that

God, in creating the numerous species of living creatures, vegetable and animal, put a permanent difference between them, rigidly confining each species to the reproduction of its own kind.

So important was this law in the mind of the Creator, and so careful was He to impress it upon the mind of man, that the formula is stated nine times in the first chapter of Genesis. There is an emphasis in this which has great significance in view of the theory of organic evolution, which, but a few years ago, was advanced as a "scientific" explanation of the origin of species of living beings, and was accepted as such by nearly all the wise and learned of this world.

After many years' investigation of the philosophy of evolution, an investigation carried on in full sympathy with the widest application of that captivating theory, I have yet to see proof of *a single fact* showing, or tending to show, the operation of the so-called "law" or "principle" of evolution in the world of Nature. No instance has ever been found of a living thing of one species coming from ancestors of another species; and there is not the slightest ground for the belief that such a thing ever happened. On the other hand, every one of the countless billions of reproductions of living creatures—the grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit—which occur every year, are in accordance with the divine command recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. Oak trees have never betrayed the slightest tendency to produce any fruit but acorns, nor acorns to produce any trees but oaks. The theory of organic evolution, promulgated by Darwin and Wallace, has nothing to commend it except that it offers an alternative to the acceptance of the account of the origin of species given in the Bible.

The attempts made by the empiricists of the last century to bring about, or to demonstrate the possibility of, spontaneous generation of living organisms by human manipulation apart from pre-existing organisms of the same species, were at first

thought to have been successful. Infusions of hay were prepared which, after being tightly sealed in suitable flasks, were heated to a temperature sufficiently high (as was supposed) to destroy all life within the flasks. These were then set aside for awhile, and kept under observation; and in the course of time they were found to contain minute living organisms. These "results of science" were heralded far and wide, and great was the rejoicing occasioned thereby.

But other men of science, among whom the most prominent was Liebig, went over the ground again, repeating the experiments more carefully; and their results showed that, in the earlier experiments, either the flasks had not been tightly sealed, or else the heat to which they were exposed had not been sufficiently great to destroy all the living organisms therein. So conclusive were these later experiments that the theory of spontaneous generation (or "abiogenesis") has had no standing whatever from that time to the present.

The following quotations will accurately inform the reader as to the best scientific opinion on this subject.

Lord Kelvin who, until his recent death, held the leading place among scientific men, used this positive language:

"Inanimate matter cannot become living except under the influence of matter already living. This is a fact in science which seems to me as well ascertained as the law of gravitation."

Again he said: "I am ready to accept as an article of faith in science, valid for all time and in all space, that *life is produced by life and only by life.*"

Professor Huxley, the advocate of the theory of "animal automatism," who at one time contended earnestly that vitality was merely a property of "protoplasm," (that is to say, the property of a particular chemical compound of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen) left this record before his death: "The present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the not-living."

Professor Tyndall says: "Every attempt made in our day to generate life independent of antecedent life has utterly broken down."

Such has indeed been, and such must ever be, the result of all human attempts to start the flow of a stream of life, or to divert one which God has started, so as to change the form of manifestation which the Author and Giver of life has given to each species of living creatures.

We wish the reader to understand that we rest nothing whatever upon the outcome of the foregoing scientific controversy, nor upon the above quoted (or any other) statements of human opinion however high their source. Faith has no foundation other than the Word of God.

Men of science may be right or wrong in their deductions from the fragmentary information possessed by them. Generally they are wrong, as is clearly enough shown by the fact that a large part of the work of each generation of men of science consists in overturning or modifying the theories of their predecessors. The foregoing is given as an illustration of the utter futility of setting up the deductions of the human reason against the assertions of the Word of God, and as a caution to the reader, if he be a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ, not to give the slightest credence to any statements made in the name of "science" or "scholarship" which call into question what is written in the inspired Scriptures.

We may ask then, Is the Word of God a living Word in this particular sense? Does it have the mysterious power of imparting life; and if so, is the life it imparts of the same sort as its own? Does it reproduce "after its kind"?

This brings up the great subject of spiritual conception and generation, concerning which the Scripture gives not a little information. Into this highly interesting but difficult subject we will not now enter. Even the beginning and maintenance of physical life in plants and animals (including man) are great and inscrutable mysteries. This is true in all stages of

the process, particularly in the initial stage of germination, which is the beginning of a new individual existence by the quickening of a seed derived from a previously existing individual of the same species. How much more mysterious, then, must be the process of spiritual generation! The Lord Jesus, in His conversation with the learned and intellectual Pharisee, Nicodemus, indicated that the subject was a very mysterious one, by the words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but *canst not tell* whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born [or begotten] of the Spirit."

Therefore, even after we have learned all that is given us to know concerning the beginning of physical life in the naturally begotten, and of spiritual life in the supernaturally begotten, the subject remains as mysterious as ever, since the Author of life has reserved it among the "secret things" which "belong unto the Lord our God" (Deut. 29:29).

But the *fact* of natural generation cannot be questioned, though the *process* be involved in unfathomable mystery. The fact of spiritual generation is equally sure to all who believe the Word of God. The Bible plainly declares it, and those who believe on the Christ of God know also by experience the beginning of a new kind of life in their own souls.

For present purposes it is sufficient to point out that spiritual generation is analogous (as might be expected) to natural generation, being effected by means of a seed, which, having been deposited in a prepared place, is quickened by the Spirit of God, and becomes itself "spirit,"—that is to say a new nature which is spiritual in its character; for "that which is born [or begotten] of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

The fact of spiritual conception, and the nature of the seed whereby it is effected, are plainly declared in 1 Peter 1:23: "Being born [or having been begotten] again, not of corruptible *seed*, but of incorruptible, by THE WORD OF GOD WHICH LIVETH and abideth for ever."

There is an immense amount of truth of the highest importance contained in this passage; but the statement which especially concerns us is that the seed of the new birth is from the living Word ("the Word which LIVETH"). This statement plainly teaches that the Word of God possesses the highest endowment of a living being, namely, that of imparting life. And with this agrees the teaching of the Lord Jesus in the parable of the sower, in the explanation of which He said, "The *seed* is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11).

In consequence of the transgression and fall of the first man, who was the original depository of the life of humanity (Gen. 2:7), the life in him, being "corruptible," became vitiated. Hence, by inexorable law, the seed of his generations also became corrupted. It follows that all men in their natural generation are begotten of corruptible (and corrupted) seed; and have received (and hence must impart to their succeeding generations) a corrupted life. What, therefore, was needed, in order to bring into existence a human family answering to God's purpose in the creation of man (Gen. 1:26), was a new and *incorruptible seed*. This has been supplied in the Word of God. All who believe that Word are begotten again (or from above); not this time of corruptible seed, "but of incorruptible, by the Word of God *which liveth*." It is a living Word.

It is to be noted that this Scripture testifies that the seed of the living Word is not merely uncorrupted, but is "incorruptible." It partakes, therefore, of the nature of the "uncorruptible God" (Rom. 1:23).

This is the guaranty to us that the Word of God is not subject to the corrupting influences of the corrupted and decaying world into which it is come. It is the *only thing* which has not succumbed to the forces of decay and death which reign universally in the earth. Indeed, it has not been affected in the slightest degree by those forces. This has been pointed out at length in the foregoing pages; but the grand truth comes to us with peculiar force in connection with the passage in 1

Peter. We need not be at all concerned as to whether the truth of God, embodied by Him in His word, has been corrupted, for it is incorruptible. And by that Word they who believe are begotten again through the operation of the Holy Spirit. To them "the Spirit is life" (Rom. 8:10).

The same truth is declared in James 1:18, in the words, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth."

Such is the spiritual conception of the "sons of God." These are born, or begotten. In no other way is a "son" brought into existence save by being begotten of a father. The sons of God must be begotten of God. The Apostle John tells us that they are begotten, "not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man" (John 1:13). The Apostle James tells us that "of His own will" they are begotten. Therefore, though the process be inscrutably mysterious, there can be no doubt as to the fact. When the Word of God is truly "heard" and thereby received into a prepared heart, that word becomes truly a seed, spiritual and incorruptible in nature, which, when quickened by the Spirit of God, becomes the life-germ of a new creature—a son of God.

The same truth is very clearly taught in our Lord's explanation of His parable of the sower, to which reference has already been made. Inasmuch as we have His own interpretation of this parable, we need be in no uncertainty as to its meaning. He says, "Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the Devil and taketh away *the Word out of their hearts*, lest they should *believe* and be saved" (Luke 8:12). And again: "But that on the good ground are they which, in *an honest and good heart*, having heard the Word keep it and bring forth fruit with patience."

The method of spiritual conception set forth in these Scriptures, which is effected in a manner quite analogous to natural conception, furnishes the explanation of the connection between "believing" and "life" referred to in many passages of Scripture. One of the most familiar of these is John 5:24

where the Lord Jesus states in the simplest language that the man who hears His Word and believes on Him who sent Him has everlasting life, and is passed out of death into life. Such a man receives the seed in his heart, and the seed is there quickened into life.

Indeed, the great purpose of the Written Word is to impart life—even eternal (that is to say divine) life—to those who are dead through trespasses and sins. The Gospel of John, which is devoted largely to the great subject of eternal life, and from which a large part of our information concerning it is derived, was “written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that *believing* ye might have *life* through his name” (John 20:31).

The same truth is declared in the familiar passage in Romans 10:9, which sets forth very definitely the special truth which constitutes the substance and marrow of God’s revelation in His Word, and which He calls upon men to believe and obey through the preaching of the Gospel, namely that Jesus Christ, who died for sinners, has been *raised from the dead*, and that He is Lord of all, to the glory of God the Father.

The main point to be apprehended in this connection is that a certain state of preparedness of heart is necessary in order that the “good seed” of the Word may germinate and grow there. Such a prepared heart is described in Scripture as a *believing* heart. That prepared state is manifested when a man *believes God*, as Abraham did (Rom. 4:17); or, in other words, when a man is ready to receive the Word of God *as* the Word of God, as the Thessalonians did (1 Thess. 2:13).

When a man has been brought, by the operation of the Spirit of God, who is the “Spirit of LIFE in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2, 10), into this state of preparation, then the Word of God, being received into the heart, acts as a seed falling into good soil. Though it be (as we might say) but the tiniest portion of God’s truth as revealed in His Word which is thus received by faith, yet it suffices through His power as the

means whereby He may quicken a dead soul. For surely the life of the Word is in every part thereof.

Such is the power of the *living* truth to impart life; and herein lies the difference between the truth which God has revealed in His Word, and truth which may be found elsewhere. For there is much truth which is not *living* truth. The multiplication table is truth; but it is not living truth. It has no quickening power. The theorems of geometry are truth; but they are not living truth. Never yet has any man been heard to testify that he had been the wretched and hopeless slave of sin, and had continued in spiritual darkness, fast bound in misery and vice until his eyes were opened by the great truth that two and two make four, or that three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; and that thereby his life had been transformed, his soul delivered from bondage, and his heart filled with joy and peace in believing. On the other hand, in the case of a true conversion, it may have been but the shortest and simplest statement of "the Word of the truth of the Gospel" (Col. 1:5) that was heard and believed, such as that "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6), yet it suffices, through the mighty power of Him who raised up Christ from among the dead, to quicken together with Christ a soul that previously was dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 1:20; 2:5). Thus the Word of truth becomes, in some inscrutable way, the vehicle for imparting that life of which the risen Christ, the Incarnate Word, is the only Source. Eternal life for the individual soul begins through believing "the testimony of God" (1 Cor. 1:2), and the testimony of God which He has in grace given to perishing sinners that they may believe and be saved, is "*concerning His Son*" (Rom. 1:3; 1 John 5:10). "And this is the record [or testimony], that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11). Therefore it is written of those who experienced the new birth, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

The teaching and preaching of the day are largely permeated by a notion to the effect that "science" is in some undefined way supplying to a greater or less extent new foundations for religious faith. We cannot, therefore, insist too strongly upon the *vital* difference (—for it is vital—being a difference upon which life depends) between truth revealed by God through His Word, and truth discovered by the investigations of man, and generally spoken of as "scientific" truth. Truth thus obtained has *no relation whatsoever* to faith and eternal life; and the effort to substitute it for, or to oppose it to, the truth revealed in God's Word as the basis of faith, must be ascribed to the activity of the "spirit of error."

Many unspiritual teachers in these last days, and many superficial readers of Scripture, deem it incredible that salvation, which is the beginning of the life of the risen Christ in the soul of a perishing man, should be wrought through an operation so apparently simple as that of receiving God's Word, through faith, into the heart.

The clear declarations of God's Word on this subject are indeed frequently ridiculed in pulpit utterances. But to such minds the germination of a seed by merely casting it into the ground would be equally incredible. These spiritually-blinded ones, wise in their own conceits, miss altogether the teaching of the Bible concerning the wonderful process of spiritual conception and generation, which, in view of the equally mysterious process of natural conception, should not be deemed "a thing incredible." "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. 1:20).

The passage in 1 Peter 1 sets forth, moreover, the fact that spiritual generation through the Word of God conforms to the great biological law stated with such emphatic iteration in the first chapter of Genesis, namely, that the life imparted is the same in kind as that of its source, all the characteristics of the latter being reproduced in it. Emphasis is laid on the fact

that the seed is incorruptible, and that the Word, which is its source, is eternal. Moreover, as in John's Gospel, the new, incorruptible, and eternal life, which proceeds from spiritual conception by the Word of God, is put into direct contrast with the natural life or "flesh." "For," continues the Apostle Peter, "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of *man* as the flower of grass." The prominent characteristic of grass is that it withereth, and of the flower of grass, or of plant life, is that it falleth away. "The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but"—in direct contrast with this—"the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." So it does, and so do all they who are begotten of the incorruptible seed of the Word.

The passage closes with the unmistakably plain statement, "And this is the Word which, by the Gospel, is preached unto you."

The result of spiritual generation is, of course, a spiritual infant—a babe. Consequently the next words of the inspired Apostle are in full keeping with, and in confirmation of, the truth we have been considering. "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (which are characteristics of the "old man") "*as new-born babes*, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:1, 2). We all know that it is of the first importance that a babe should have appropriate nourishment in order that it may grow; but this belongs to the subject of spiritual nutrition, which will be considered later on.

Other Scriptures testify with equal clearness to the great and glorious truth that those who are begotten of the Spirit, through the incorruptible seed of the Word, receive a nature of the same sort as that of the Divine Source of their life. In the eighth chapter of Romans there is a section devoted to the "sons of God," in whom the Spirit dwells (verses 9-16); and of these it is declared that God predestinated them "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren" (verse 30).

Here the truth of likeness with the Son of God is broadly stated. Other passages declare specific features included in this general likeness. Thus 1 John 3:9 states that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit [or practice] sin; for His [God's] seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born [begotten] of God. In this the children of God are manifest." The new nature which characterizes the new creature is one that cannot sin; and hence, when this new nature begins to manifest itself in the quickened soul, there is a struggle between its desires and those of the old nature ("the flesh"); for the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit has desires against the flesh, and these are directly opposed, the one to the other (Gal. 5:17). Every one who has been begotten from above knows from experience what this struggle means.

Again, in 1 John 3:2, 3, it is stated that now, even at the present time, are we (believers) the sons of God, though we appear so little like it. What we shall be does not yet appear; but we know, upon the clear testimony of Scripture, that "when He shall appear we shall be *like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is."

These statements are so clear that it is not necessary to cite to those who believe the Word of God other passages which declare that spiritual procreation is according to the law repeated nine times in Genesis 1, "after his kind."

In closing this important section of our subject (which might be greatly amplified if our purpose were to treat exhaustively the great truth of spiritual generation) it will be profitable to notice briefly the close relation between the Written Word and the Incarnate Word in the matter of the impartation of spiritual life.

This truth brings before us the Son of God in His wonderful and unique character of the Source of Life to a world and to human beings, which had fallen under the power and dominion of death.

"Through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and so death passed upon [*lit.* passed through to] all men" (Rom. 5:12). Thus death entered and established its universal sovereignty over all men. Such expressions as "death reigned," "sin reigned unto death" (Rom. 5:14, 17, 21), state a fact whereof the evidences meet our eye whichever way we look.

Therefore, after Adam's transgression and the ruin wrought by it, the most urgent need of the world was LIFE. To this end the Son of God became a partaker of flesh and blood, "that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "I am come," He said, "that they might have *life*" (John 10:10).

In the Gospel by John, the first thing asserted of Him, after setting forth His eternal Deity, and His mighty work as Creator, is the significant statement, "In Him was LIFE" (John 1:4). This is He who "cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:33).

We need not cite the many passages of Scripture which witness to Christ as the new Source of life to a world that had fallen under the power of death; but would call attention only to a few of those which connect Him directly with the wonderful process of spiritual generation.

The very first of all prophecies, that concerning the woman's "seed" (Gen. 3:15) is thus fulfilled in Him; and the designation "seed," thus at the very beginning applied to Him as coming in flesh and blood, carries with it the great promise of a new humanity which was to spring up from and out of Himself.

Again, as the "seed" of Abraham, He is the inheritor (for Himself and for His generations) of all the promises made "to Abraham and his seed." That we might not miss the meaning of this truth, so precious to those who, through faith, "are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:6), it is expressly stated as follows: "Now to Abraham *and his seed* were the promises

teaches the lesson of spiritual generation. The life in those who have been quickened together with Christ (Eph. 2:5) is truly *His* life reproduced in them by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and whose law sets us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). We may thus say, "Christ who is our life" (Col. 3:4); and as this new life unfolds itself in the being of the believer, and manifests the characteristics of the One who is its source, the former is able also to say, "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).

Whether, therefore, we are regarding the Written Word or the Incarnate Word, it is true (as has been well said) that "the Word" is the whole matter or substance of what God has revealed; but it is also true that any portion of that matter or substance which enters into a human heart, and which, as a seed, germinates and performs there the stupendous miracle of reproduction, is also the Word, imparting life "after his kind"—life incorruptible and everlasting as the Word itself.

Thus, in the highest sense of which we can take knowledge, the Word of God is a "Word of Life"—living and reproducing its kind; and thus is being fulfilled the promise to Him who died that we might live, of Whom it was said of old, "He shall see *His seed*, He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53:10, 11).

The believer, too, may say with David, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psa. 17:15). That will be glory for us; but, what is more important, it will be glory also for Him.

XI. THE LIFE-SUSTAINING WORD

The life possessed by human beings is not only a derived life, that is, a life obtained from an external source, but it is a dependent life, requiring continual sustenance. It must be sustained by constant and suitable nutrition, received into the body at short intervals. Man's strength whereof he boasts,

and indeed his very existence in the body, are dependent on food, and this food itself must be organic matter, that is to say, matter which has once been living. The fact of this dependence upon food, and upon food which man is utterly unable to make for himself out of inorganic matter, though all the materials are within his reach, should teach him a lesson in humility; but it seems not to have that effect.

We say that man is utterly unable to produce food-stuff though all the materials whereof it is composed are abundantly at hand. This is a pertinent and obvious fact, though one whereof little account is taken. God has imparted to the lowly plant the ministry of supplying food to all the animal creation, and has taught to it, and to it alone, the marvelous secret of converting the minerals of the earth and air—inert, lifeless elements, utterly incapable of furnishing nourishment to animals or man—into living tissue, endowed with the property of nourishing living creatures higher in the scale of life. “He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that *he may bring forth food out of the earth*” (Psa. 104:14).

The humble vegetable organism knows how to extract the nitrogen from the earth, and the carbon from the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and to combine these, in exactly the proper proportions, with the oxygen and hydrogen in water, and with traces of lime and other elements, forming with the aid of heat and light from the sun, living tissue, suitable and necessary for food. This wonderful operation of chemical synthesis is carried on by the modest vegetable so unostentatiously as to attract little notice; and though it has been under the observation of inquisitive and imitative man for thousands of years he has not the faintest notion of how it is done. All the learning and skill of all the chemists in the world, with the resources of all the laboratories in the world, could not produce an ounce of food, though the elements out of which it is made exist everywhere, and in the greatest abundance.

But God, having imparted physical life to His creatures, has also made ample provision for the maintenance of that life, by supplying through the inscrutable synthesis carried on unceasingly by the vegetable kingdom, abundant food, capable, when taken into the body and properly assimilated, of supplying the waste that is constantly in progress in every part of the body, and of maintaining the strength thereof.

Furthermore, if the conversion of minerals into food-stuff by the members of the vegetable kingdom is a process displaying the marvelous wisdom of God, the process of digestion and nutrition is not less so. Nothing could be more improbable than that food, taken into the body by way of the mouth, should, without any attention or supervision from the tenant of that body, be digested, the valuable parts separated from the worthless, the latter discharged from the body, the former converted into tissue, muscle, bone, sinew, nerve-cell, blood-corpuscle, hair, nails, etc., and distributed automatically throughout the body, each to the place requiring it, and all in due proportion.

In this we have again a process far transcending the comprehension of the most learned men, who must eat and be nourished like other men, and who are equally ignorant of the process whereby their lives are sustained, and whereby they gain the strength which they use to deny God and glorify man.

Men boast in these days of their "independence," and make much of "self-reliance." But this is the height of presumptuous folly; for man is a most helplessly dependent creature, not even able, like the plant, to prepare his own food from the mineral elements, but dependent daily upon living creatures much lower than himself in the scale of being. And so far from having a basis for self-reliance, he does not know how to conduct the simplest of the vital processes of his own body. If his Creator, of whom principally man loves to fancy himself independent, should turn over to him the operation of the least

of those essential processes for the briefest time, the poor creature would miserably perish.

As with the physical life, so is it with the spiritual life of those who have been begotten again of the incorruptible seed of the Word. These spiritual beings require appropriate food; and God has abundantly provided for this need. In studying the important subject of spiritual nutrition we shall learn again the relation between Christ, the Incarnate Word, and the Written Word. Both are spoken of repeatedly as food for the children of God.

The third, fourth and fifth chapters of the Gospel by John treat of the imparting of eternal life as the free gift of God through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to all who believe on Him; and the sixth chapter treats of spiritual nutrition. Therein, after feeding the multitude miraculously, thus showing Himself as the one by whose power food is multiplied in the earth, He reveals Himself as "the Bread of Life." Twice He says, "I am that bread of life" (verses 35 and 48) and in verse 33, "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." He Who gives the life is the One who also sustains it. Again He says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (verse 51). And of His words He says, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; *the words* that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (verse 63).

These sayings to the natural mind are, of course, meaningless; but they are addressed to faith. "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" is the question which the unbelieving heart asks. How Christ can impart Himself to sustain the "inner man" is a question to which no answer can now be had. The process is incomprehensible to man. But we have seen that the process of physical nutrition is equally beyond human comprehension and contrary to all *a priori* probabilities.

Looking more particularly at what is said in this connection concerning the written or spoken Word of God we find that

the Word of God is "living" in the sense that, like other living substance, it has the property of furnishing nutrition, and thereby sustaining life. It is a life-sustaining Word. But here a notable difference attracts our attention. Physical food comes up out of the earth (Psa. 104:14), while spiritual food comes down out of heaven. (John 6:50.)

Reference has already been made to the fact that, after setting forth the great truth of spiritual conception and generation through the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, the Apostle Peter enjoins attention to spiritual nutrition. "Wherefore," he says, "as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:1, 2). Evidently his Lord's threefold injunction, "Feed My sheep," "Feed My lambs," had impressed upon him the importance of spiritual nutrition. But proper feeding requires appetite for wholesome food, and so he seeks to excite a desire in young Christians for that whereby they may grow. And he immediately connects the Word with Christ saying, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

The importance of nourishing and sustaining the new life received upon coming to Christ, and the unhappy consequences which always result from neglect of the appropriate diet, have been so often and so forcibly stated by the servants of Christ that it seems hardly necessary to dwell upon this matter. What our subject specially calls for is to note the correspondence between God's way of sustaining man's physical life by food derived from a living source, and His way of sustaining the believer's spiritual life by food from a living source, that is to say from the living Word.

The passages which present the Word of God as the food for His children are very familiar; and in bringing them to mind again we would impress it upon our readers that these statements are not to be taken as if they were poetical or figurative, but as very literal, practical and immensely important. In making man it was not God's plan that he should

live by bread, or physical food alone, but "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut. 8:3). The manna was given to His people in the wilderness to teach them this lesson, and that they might learn their dependence upon God. Hence this passage was used by the Second Man in His combat with the devil in the wilderness, it being the purpose of the latter to inculcate in man the idea of independence of God. Thus did the Man Jesus Christ, with the Sword of the Spirit, strike sure and true at the central purpose of His great adversary.

It is by *every* word of God that man is to be fed. No part of the Bible can be neglected without loss and detriment; and it will be observed that there is, in the Bible, a variety of spiritual nutriment analogous to the variety of physical food which God has provided for the needs of the physical man. If there be milk for babes, there is also strong food for those who are mature. And there is the penalty of arrested growth paid by those who remain content with the relatively weak diet suitable for infants, who know, perhaps, only that their sins are forgiven; as the Apostle John says: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you" (1 John 2:12). But those who have to be fed on a milk diet, that is to say, the simplest elementary truths of the Gospel, are unskillful in the word of righteousness. Infants cannot do anything for themselves, much less can they prepare food, or render any service to others. Hence the Apostle Paul, writing to the Hebrews, upbraids some of them because, at a time when they ought to have been teachers, they had need to be taught again the first principles, and were become "such as have need of milk and not of strong food. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong food belongeth to them that are of full age" (Heb. 5:12-14).

Jeremiah says, "Thy words were found and I did eat them" (Jer. 15:16). Thereby he found spiritual strength to sustain

him in his most difficult and trying ministry, from which, because of his timid and sensitive disposition, he shrank back in agony of soul. To be a good and effective minister of Christ it is necessary that one be well nourished through partaking largely of the abundant spiritual food which the living Word supplies. Thus Paul admonished his child in the faith, Timothy, to whom he wrote, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, *nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine*" (1 Tim. 4:6).

One practical point with reference to the process of nutrition should be noted. While the living creature cannot comprehend the process, and has no part whatever in supervising it, or carrying it on, and while he is therefore not responsible for the results, the process cannot be carried on unless he takes the food into his being and properly masticates it. Therefore, up to the point of swallowing the food, the living being is responsible, and his volition is exercised. After that the process passes beyond his knowledge and control. Food may be of the best quality, and may be in greatest abundance, but it imparts no nourishment while it remains in the pantry, or on the table.

In like manner the responsibility is with the child of God to partake of the spiritual food so plentifully provided, and to meditate therein day and night (Psa. 1:2). Meditation upon what is read is to spiritual nutrition what mastication is to physical nutrition; and it takes time. The result, however, is ample compensation for time so occupied, for we read of him who observes this simple rule of spiritual dietation that "He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3). It means a fruitful life, a vigorous and healthful life, and a prosperous life.

These results are just as sure to follow obedience to the laws of spiritual diet as physical nutrition is to follow attention to the proper reception of material food; and the contrary results are just as sure to follow neglect of those laws in the one case as in the other. The natural mind would be likely to demand an explanation; but faith does not require to know the process, it being sufficient to hear the command. If one refused to partake of his natural food until instructed as to the process of digestion he would starve. In each case the process is inscrutable, but the fact is certain.

XII. THE LIFE-TRANSFORMING WORD

FEEDING upon the Word of God, the bread of life, must necessarily be beneficial to the whole man, including his intellectual and physical being as well as his spiritual.

Much deference is paid in these days to the "powers of the mind." Intellectual prowess is what wins the victories in the fierce commercial struggle of the times. Business men are, of course, keen to take advantage of this condition, as may be seen by the many and costly advertisements of "brain foods;" and many millions of dollars are annually acquired by the shrewd exploiters of these preparations. This, of course, could not be unless there were multitudes who give heed to the assurance that, by the use of the advertised article, it is possible to produce "a new set of brains."

The Bible does not speak of a new set of brains, but it does say to believers, "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23), and, "Be not conformed to this world [or age], but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). The new man requires a new mind, and provision is made to that end. The old mind, with all its habits of self-occupation (a sure breeder of unhappiness and discontent), its morbid tendencies, its craving for excitement and sensation, its imaginations, appetites, tastes, inclinations and desires, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of

God, is to be displaced, and a new mind substituted; for godliness has the promise of the vigor of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.

How, then, is this injunction to be carried out? It is of importance to millions of anxious souls to have a clear answer to this question. And it may be had. The every-day incidents and the atmosphere amid which the average man and woman spend their time are such as to produce mental disturbances and disorders to an extent which, if understood, and if anything could impress this thoughtless and excited age, would create wide-spread alarm. It was stated recently that there were twenty-eight thousand inmates of the insane asylums of New York State (a single state of the Union) prior to October, 1907, and that in six months following the industrial convulsion of that month the number of inmates was increased by three thousand. The startling increase in the number of suicides adds its forcible testimony; and the frequency with which one encounters cases of mental depression, insomnia, melancholia, and other nervous disorders, tells of wide-spread and insidious foes which attack the seat of reason, and which call for methods and means of defense and repair which are beyond the resources of medicine.

The writer knows by experience the indescribable horrors of depressed and morbid mental states, and knows, too, what a transformation is effected by the "renewing of the mind" according to the Biblical injunction. Full provision is made for this marvelous transformation, and the conditions wherein it is effected are plainly set forth and are accessible to every believer.

In this case the study of the word used in the command ("be transformed") will make us acquainted with the conditions essential to the transformation. The word in question seems to have been set apart by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of teaching the important and wonderful secret of the transformation of the believer, during his existence in the body, into

the likeness of Christ; so that all believers might be able to say with Paul, "We have the mind of Christ."

It will, therefore, surely repay the reader to note carefully the usages of this particular word. Its first occurrence is in the Gospel narratives of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ, and is in fact the very word there translated "transfigured" (Matt. 17:2; Mark 9:2). The word is literally "metamorphosed." "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." This may well serve to teach the nature of the change contemplated. It is one that brings the radiance of heaven into the mind and tinges even the commonplace things with a glow of heavenly light.

The next occurrence of the word is, as we have already seen, in Romans 12:2, where believers are enjoined to be not cut out on the pattern of this age, but to be metamorphosed or transfigured by the renewing of their minds.

The third and last occurrence of the word tells us plainly *how* this great transformation is brought about. For the Bible is a very practical book. It comes, moreover, from One Who understands perfectly the limitations of man, Who knows and declares that the latter is, in his natural state, "without strength," that is to say, utterly impotent (Rom. 5:6). We may be sure, therefore, that when God calls upon the quickened soul to do a thing, He puts the means required for it within His reach. And so, in these plain words we read the conditions requisite for effecting the desired transformation: "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, *are changed* into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

The word here translated "are changed" is the same word (metamorphosed or transfigured) used in the other passages cited; and these are the only occurrences of that word in the Bible.

The teaching is very clear. When the Jews read the Word of God a veil is over their hearts, their minds being blinded

(verse 14). Or, as stated in Romans 11:25, "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Hence, they do not behold there Him of whom the Scriptures testify. But, for us who believe, the veil is done away in Christ, and consequently, all we beholding are transfigured into the same image by the Divine and irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit.

If, when we look into the Word of God, *we do not see Christ there*, we look to no purpose, for He is everywhere in the Book.

Let it be carefully noted that this transformation is not the work of the man who beholds Christ in the Word; for the process is carried on while the former is not occupied with himself at all, or with his transformation, but is absorbed in the contemplation of the glory of the Lord. The transformation is effected by the power of the Spirit of God; and we may learn from this passage the important lesson that occupation with, and concern about, the work of the Spirit in us can only hinder that work. Let it suffice us that He Who has begun a good work *in us* will perform it until the day of Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) Our part, and it should be also our delight, is to be continually beholding or contemplating the glory of the Lord; and while so doing we "*are changed*" into the same image, and all the faster if we are unconscious of ourselves.

Let it be also noted that the transformation is a gradual operation, calling for steadfastness in contemplating the Object placed before us by the Holy Spirit. Little by little, as our gaze is fixed upon Him, the old traits and dispositions which are unlike Him are replaced by His own characteristics. Thus the work proceeds "from glory to glory." The conformation to His image, which is God's purpose for all the sons of God (Rom. 8:29), is not accomplished, as some would have it, by an instantaneous transfiguration, a convulsive upheaval and displacement of the old nature, brought about by working one's

emotions into an ecstatic state; but is accomplished gradually while the believer is continually occupied with Christ ("beholding"). There is no hysterical short-cut to the desired result. For Christ must be known from the Written Word under the tuition of the Holy Spirit; and the process should continue during the whole term of the believer's existence in the body.

Thus the living Word becomes the regulator and transformer of the minds of those who diligently seek it. Under its potent influence confusion of thought, perplexities, depressed mental states, and other hurtful conditions are dissipated, and the serene tranquillity and repose of the mind of Christ are reproduced in those who are redeemed by His precious blood.

We are passing through the domain of death, the country of the last enemy that is to be destroyed, and who has put all things in this scene under his feet (1 Cor. 15:26, 27). On every hand our eyes meet the unmistakable evidences of the supreme sovereignty of death. But in this domain of death there is a Living Word—a Living Word in a dying world. The forces of corruption and decay cannot fasten upon it, and it laughs at the attacks of its enemies.

But that Word is here, not merely to manifest life, but rather to impart life to those who are perishing, and to bring them into vital contact with the new Life-Source of humanity, the Son of God, the Second Man, the Lord from Heaven, Who liveth and was dead, and behold He is alive forevermore, and has the keys of death and of Hades (1 Cor. 15:47; Rev. 1:18). He, as Man, has crossed the gulf between the realm of death and that of life. To that end He became "a partaker of flesh and blood," not to improve flesh and blood, but in order that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14, 15). Having Himself crossed that gulf

He is the Way of life to all who believe on Him, who, having heard His Word—the Word of life—have likewise passed out of death into life (John 5:24).

This is the wonderful provision of God for the deliverance of dying men. In order that they might not die, and because God wills not that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9), He has sent into this dying world a Word of Life. For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Matt. 22:32).

In comparison with the provision of divine wisdom, power and grace, from the God who quickeneth the dead (Rom. 4:17), how pitifully foolish and vain are all human schemes for the betterment, reform and cultivation of that old man who has fallen under the sovereignty of death! Men are very ingenious, but none has yet brought forward a scheme for abolishing or escaping death, or for raising the dead. Without that, of what avail are plans of improvement? And what end do they serve but to blind men's minds to the truth that they are dead, and so are beyond all but the power of a God who raises the dead? Surely these schemes are the most successful devices of "the god of this age."

What men need is not morality, but life; not to make death respectable, but to receive the gift of eternal life; not decent interment, but a pathway out of the realm of death. Many men have brought forward their schemes for the "uplift of humanity" (though the results thereof are not yet discernible); but there is only One Man who makes, or ever made, the offer of eternal life. None other has ever said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on Me though he were dead yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). He only claims to be the "Fountain of Living Waters" (Jer. 2:13; John 4:14; 7:37), and says to all who are suffering the thirst of death, "Come unto Me and drink" (John 7:37).

Therefore, in concluding these reflections upon the Living Word, we obey the command, "Let him that heareth say,

Come," and would lovingly repeat the last invitation of grace recorded in the Word of Life:

“LET HIM THAT IS ATHIRST COME.
AND WHOSOEVER WILL,
LET HIM TAKE
THE WATER OF LIFE
FREELY.”

(Rev. 22:17.)

CHAPTER II

"THE SCRIPTURES"

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When our Lord said, "Search the Scriptures," every Jew to whom He spoke knew what He meant. There were other writings in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, but the Scriptures were a body of writings marked off from all others by their sacredness and authority as the Word of God. Their history can be traced from the time of Moses to Christ. In Exodus 17:14 we read: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua." As to the writing material Moses used we do not know, but we do know that in Egypt papyrus plant, linen and cotton cloth, the skins of animals and stone were used in making books of various kinds. The Ten Commandments were written on tables of stone, and with Egyptian mummies we have preserved even to this day cotton and linen cloth such as was frequently used for writing.

In Deuteronomy 31:9 we have the historic record of the fact that Moses obeyed the command of God: "And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord." And in verse 24: "It came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God." The book was finished and placed by the side of the Ark for safe keeping.

In Joshua 1:8 we read: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Now that the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day has departed, the Book is to be the guide of Israel and their religion is to be to a large extent a book religion. God is speaking to them out of the "Book of the Law."

It is probable that the book which Joshua read was the identical manuscript which Moses wrote in the wilderness. There may have been copies made of it, but we have no record of the fact. Frequent mention of it is made through the books of the Bible. The same book, or a copy of it, appears again a thousand years afterward under the reign of Josiah, as we learn from 2 Kings 22:8: "And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan and he read it."

In Ezra we find it again in the hands of the prophet on the pulpit of wood in the open air, reading it and making its meaning plain unto the people. From these and other Scriptures three inferences may be fairly drawn:

1. *The Bible is literature written by the command of God.* He certainly commanded Moses to write the book of the law. To John on the Isle of Patmos a great voice as of a trumpet said, "What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches." And before the vision vanishes he is commanded to "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." He is to write history, current events and predictions; and much of the "the Scriptures" may be classified under these three heads.

2. *The Bible is literature written by the command of God, and under the guidance of God.* In Peter 1:21 we read: "No

prophecy ever came by the will of man, but man spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."

3. The Bible is literature written by the command of God, under the guidance of God, and *preserved by the providential care of God*. Moses commanded that the book of the law should be placed by the side of the Ark. No safer place could have been found, and the more I study the history of the Bible the more profoundly am I convinced that God has kept His book by the side of some ark all through the ages. As the Church has been under His care and protection, so has the Book.

It is not difficult for me to believe that the manuscript which Hilkiyah found in the Temple was the identical book which Moses wrote in the wilderness, and that this very manuscript was in the hands of Ezra on the pulpit of wood as he preached in the open air. It is only one thousand years from Joshua to Josiah and only one hundred and seventy-five years from Josiah to Ezra. There are now in our libraries scores of manuscripts which we know to be over a thousand years old, and two or three which have certainly been preserved more than fourteen hundred years. With the kindly oriental climate and the care which the Jewish reverence for the book would naturally lead them to have, it is not at all improbable that the manuscript of Moses should have been preserved for more than a thousand years. And the history of the Bible from the time of Christ to the present confirms the proposition that it has been preserved by the providential care of God.

Let us now look at "the Scriptures" in their own light. In John 5:39 Jesus said: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." And in 2 Timothy 3:16 we read, "All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." In these Scriptures are four things:

I. A BIBLICAL DEFINITION OF THE BIBLE

The phrase, "the Scriptures," suggests a synthetic definition of the Bible. There were other writings, but these were *the* writings. They had them in the Hebrew tongue, and also a translation into the Greek, known as the "Septuagint," made nearly three hundred years before Christ. But it takes our second Scripture to complete this definition of the Bible—"Every Scripture is God-breathed." A noted scholar has taken the pains to collate the texts in the New Testament where this Greek idiom occurs, and he declares that the King James version, and not the Revised, is the correct translation, and several eminent scholars on the Committee of Revision agreed with him. "All Scripture is God-breathed" is evidently what the Holy Spirit meant to write. Of course, the writers were inspired. "The Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David" (Acts 1:16). "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel" (Ezek. 1:3). But the writings as well as the writers were inspired, because "all Scripture is God-breathed." God, who "breathed into man the breath of life and he became a living soul," has also breathed into His Book the breath of life, so that it is "the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

There are many writers, but one Author. These writers were not automatons. Each one shows his own style and personality which the Holy Spirit uses.

II. A BIBLICAL USE OF THE BIBLE

It is four-fold: "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." "Doctrine" is the teaching, not of the *man* as he may express his opinion in social converse, but of the *ambassador* who carries with him the weight of his government's authority; and in the Bible we find *God's official proclamation* of love, pardon, cleansing, righteousness and peace.

The word "reproof" comes after doctrine, because it has to do with the character which doctrine makes. The Bible is profitable not only for the doctrine which we get out of it, but it is the standard by which we try our doctrines. It proves and reproofs. It is the plumb-line that we drop by the wall to see if it is straight. It is the yard-stick by which we measure every creed.

The word "correction" means *restoration*, and gives a thought in advance of doctrine and reproof. It has in it the thought of making right what we have found to be wrong. The plumb-line may show that the wall leans, but it cannot straighten it. The yard-stick may reveal that the cloth is too short, but it cannot lengthen it. The Bible, however, not only shows us wherein we are wrong, but it can right us. When Canova saw the piece of marble which, at great expense, had been secured for a celebrated statue, his practiced eye discovered a little piece of black running through it, and he rejected it. He could discover the black, but he could not make the black white. The Bible discovers the black *and* makes it white.

The fourth word, "instruction," means literally "child-culture," and has in it all that the parent needs for the growth, development and maturing of the child. The Bible is a training school *in righteousness*. Other books give training in music, rhetoric, oratory, but the specialty of the Bible is training in righteousness.

III. A BIBLICAL METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY

It is suggested by the two words "search" and "profitable." Whatever is profitable is apt to cost labor. The worthless we can get without effort. Hence the strength of the phrase, "Search the Scriptures." It means to "look through and through." It is the word used in the Scripture, "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." As God searches our hearts so let us search the Bible.

The Bible unsearched is a mine unworked, the difference between the Klondyke years ago and the Klondyke enriching its industrious owners today. To learn the Word of God requires diligent and persistent searching. A man who died in an English almshouse several years ago gave to his relatives an unproductive piece of land, so worthless that he did not have to pay taxes on it. The relatives searched it, and as a result they are today millionaires. The pauper was rich without knowing it, and he was ignorant of the fact because he did not search his possessions.

Every Christian with the Bible in hand is rich whether he knows it or not. Let him search and find hidden treasures. This search implies sight and light. There is need of spiritual discernment. "The natural man discerneth not the things of God." And hence the need of inspiration which comes from trusting the Holy Spirit as the Revealer of Truth. When Galileo turned his little telescope to the heavens, he found that he really had a new pair of eyes. He could now see the mountains of the moon, the satellites of Neptune, and the ring around Saturn. So we read the Bible in the light of the Bible, and as more light comes, better sight is imparted; while, on the other hand, as better sight is imparted, more light is revealed.

The Christian with spiritual discernment can afford to "search the Scriptures" with the Holy Spirit alone as his guide. Commentaries are good, but not good as substitutes for independent search. When Alexander the Great stood before Diogenes as he sat by his tub, the general asked the philosopher what he could do for him. The rather grim reply was, "Simply get out of my light." And any searcher has a right to say "Get out of my light" to every one whose shadow comes between him and the Truth.

Any method of searching is good, though some may be better than others. The "grasshopper method" by which we take a word or subject and jump from one place to another,

collating the texts which have the word or subject in them, is not to be despised. God shook the world through Dwight L. Moody, who was fond of this method. I have learned to love what, for lack of a better word, I call the sectional method, by which one begins at a certain place and goes through paragraph, chapter or book, gathering and classifying every thought. It reminds one of Mr. Spurgeon's saying suggested by the worm-eaten Bible which he found on the table of a Scottish wayside inn. Holding it up to the light, he noticed only one hole through which the light shone. One worm, it seems, had begun at Genesis and eaten through to Revelation, and Spurgeon prayed, "Lord, make me a book-worm like that." Such a book-worm never turns into an earth-worm. It will have wings by and by.

But whatever be your method, do not fail to read the Bible by books. Read Genesis at a sitting. You can do it in less than three hours. Then take Exodus; then Leviticus, and so on through the whole library of sixty-six volumes. The astronomer should look at the heavens as a whole before he takes to his telescope. The botanist should look at the fields and gardens before he takes to his microscope. If you have not read the Scriptures, a book at a sitting, you may take it for granted that you do not know your Bible.

A study of words yields a rich harvest of knowledge and blessing.

Luther said that he studied the Bible as he gathered apples. First, he shook the whole tree, that the ripest might fall. Then he climbed the tree and shook each limb, and when he had shaken each limb, he shook each branch, and after each branch every twig, and then looked under each leaf. Let us search the Bible as a whole; shake the whole tree; read it as rapidly as you would any other book; then shake every limb, studying book after book. Then shake every branch, giving attention to the chapters when they do not break the sense. Then shake every twig by careful study of the paragraphs and sentences,

and you will be rewarded, if you will look under every leaf, by searching the meaning of words.

IV. A BIBLICAL MOTIVE FOR BIBLE STUDY

This is two-fold:

1. That we may have right thinking about eternal life. "In them ye think ye have eternal life." In Christ we have eternal life, but in the Scriptures is our thinking about it. We have the blessedness of the man whose "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." My arch of salvation rests upon two pillars. The first pillar is what Christ did for me, and that is always the same length. Time was when the second pillar was assurance of salvation through my feelings. If I felt well and happy, that pillar was of the right length, and seemed solid enough, but when depressed feelings came, the pillar seemed shorter and threatened the arch. One day, however, I read 1 John 5:13: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." And I saw that I was expected to trust the Scriptures and not my feelings for assurance. From that day the pillar of assurance has been all the time of the same length, for God's Word never changes. Feelings may come and go, but "I keep on believing" the promise. I think I have eternal life, not because I feel so and so, but because God says so. Now the pillar of Christ's merit and the pillar of His promise are of the same length, and the arch of salvation is no longer threatened by changing feelings.

2. That we may learn of Jesus. "They are they which testify of Me." Few things are more interesting and none more profitable than tracing the Messianic idea through the Bible. It begins with the curse upon the serpent in Genesis, and closes with "the Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the throne" in Revelation. In Christian character the image of Christ is marred by imperfections, but in the Scriptures the

portrait is perfect. A friend described to me a painting which hung on the wall of his boyhood home. When you first saw it, it was a beautiful landscape with trees, streams, houses and people, but, while gazing upon it, all these beautiful things began to form into a human face. On a closer inspection you perceived that the whole picture was intended to give the face of Christ. The devout student of the Scriptures is constantly having experiences like this. He sees in the Bible trees of faithfulness, streams of truth, landscapes of loveliness in deed and character, but they are all so arranged in their relation to Christ as to bring out the features of His character. While we thus see Him as He is, we become more and more like Him, until by and by we shall see His unveiled face and be completely transformed into His likeness. "Search the Scriptures" for a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ,

CHAPTER III

THE CERTAINTY AND IMPORTANCE OF THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

BY REV. R. A. TORREY, D. D.

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The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the corner-stone of Christian doctrine. It is mentioned directly one hundred and four or more times in the New Testament. It was the most prominent and cardinal point in the apostolic testimony. When the apostolic company, after the apostasy of Judas Iscariot, felt it necessary to complete their number again by the addition of one to take the place of Judas Iscariot, it was in order that he might "be a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:21, 22). The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the one point that Peter emphasized in his great sermon on the Day of Pentecost. His whole sermon centered in that fact. Its key-note was, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32, cf. vs. 24-31). When the Apostles were filled again with the Holy Spirit some days later, the one central result was that "with great power gave the Apostles *witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*" The central doctrine that the Apostle Paul preached to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill was *Jesus and the resurrection.* (Acts 17:18, cf. Acts 23:6; 1 Cor. 15:15.) The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the two fundamental truths of the Gospel, the other being His atoning death. Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:1, 3, 4, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; For I

delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and *that He rose again* the third day according to the Scriptures." This was the glad tidings, first, that Christ died for our sins and made atonement; and second, that He rose again. The crucifixion loses its meaning without the resurrection. Without the resurrection, the death of Christ was only the heroic death of a noble martyr. With the resurrection, it is the atoning death of the Son of God. It shows that death to be of sufficient value to cover all our sins, for it was the sacrifice of the Son of God. In it we have an all-sufficient ground for knowing that the blackest sin is atoned for. Disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Christian faith is vain. "If Christ be not risen," cries Paul, "then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). And later he adds, "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain. You are yet in your sins." Paul, as the context clearly shows, is talking about the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the one doctrine that has power to save any one who believes it with the heart. As we read in Rom. 10:9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that *God hath raised Him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved." To know the power of Christ's resurrection is one of the highest ambitions of the intelligent believer, to attain which he sacrifices all things and counts them but refuse (Phil. 3:8-10 R. V.).

While the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is the corner-stone of Christian doctrine, it is also the Gibraltar of Christian evidence, and the Waterloo of infidelity and rationalism. If the Scriptural assertions of Christ's resurrection can be established as historic certainties, the claims and doctrines of Christianity rest upon an impregnable foundation. On the other hand, if the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead cannot be established, Christianity must go. It was a true

instinct that led a leading and brilliant agnostic in England to say, that there is no use wasting time discussing the other miracles. The essential question is, Did Jesus Christ rise from the dead? adding, that if He did, it was easy enough to believe the other miracles; but, if not, the other miracles must go.

Are the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ statements of fact or are they fiction, fables, myths? There are three separate lines of proof that the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ are exact statements of historic fact.

I. THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE AUTHENTICITY AND TRUTHFULNESS OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES

This is an altogether satisfactory argument. The external proofs of the authenticity and truthfulness of the Gospel narratives are overwhelming, but the argument is long and intricate and it would take a volume to discuss it satisfactorily. The other arguments are so completely sufficient and overwhelming and convincing to a candid mind that we can do without this, good as it is in its place.

The next argument is from—

II. THE INTERNAL PROOFS OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE GOSPEL RECORDS

This argument is thoroughly conclusive, and we shall state it briefly in the pages which follow. We shall not assume anything whatever. We shall not assume that the four Gospel records are true history; we shall not assume that the four Gospels were written by the men whose names they bear, though it could be easily proven that they were; we shall not even assume that they were written in the century in which Jesus is alleged to have lived and died and risen again, nor in the next century, nor in the next. We will assume absolutely nothing. We will start out with a fact which we all know

to be a fact, namely, that we have the four Gospels today, whoever wrote them and whenever they were written. We shall place these four Gospels side by side, and see if we can discern in them the marks of truth or of fiction.

1. The first thing that strikes us as we compare these Gospels one with another is that they are *four separate and independent accounts*. This appears plainly from the apparent discrepancies in the four different accounts. These apparent discrepancies are marked and many. It would have been impossible for these four accounts to have been made up in collusion with one another, or to have been derived from one another and so many and so marked discrepancies to be found in them. There is harmony between the four accounts, but the harmony does not lie upon the surface; it comes out only by protracted and thorough study. It is precisely such a harmony as would exist between accounts written or related by several different persons, each looking at the events recorded from his own standpoint. It is precisely such a harmony as would not exist in four accounts manufactured in collusion, or derived one from the other. In four accounts manufactured in collusion, whatever of harmony there might be would appear on the surface. Whatever discrepancy there might be would only come out by minute and careful study. But with the four Gospels the case is just the opposite. Harmony comes out by minute and careful study, and the apparent discrepancy lies upon the surface. Whether true or false, these four accounts are separate and independent from one another. (The four accounts also supplement one another, the third account sometimes reconciling apparent discrepancies between two.)

These accounts must be either a record of facts that actually occurred or else fictions. If fictions, they must have been fabricated in one of two ways—either independently of one another, or in collusion with one another. They cannot have been fabricated independently of one another; the agreements

are too marked and too many. It is absolutely incredible that four persons sitting down to write an account of what never occurred independently of one another should have made their stories agree to the extent that these do. On the other hand, they cannot have been made up, as we have already seen, in collusion with one another; the apparent discrepancies are too numerous and too noticeable. It is proven they were not made up independently of one another; it is proven they were not made up in collusion with one another, so we are driven to the conclusion that they were not made up at all, that they are a true relation of facts as they actually occurred. We might rest the argument here and reasonably call the case settled, but we will go on still further:

2. The next thing we notice is that *each of these accounts bears striking indications of having been derived from eye witnesses.*

The account of an eye witness is readily distinguishable from the account of one who is merely retailing what others have told him. Any one who is accustomed to weigh evidence in court or in historical study soon learns how to distinguish the report of an eye witness from mere heresay evidence. Any careful student of the Gospel records of the resurrection will readily detect many marks of the eye witness. Some years ago when lecturing at an American university, a gentleman was introduced to me as being a skeptic. I asked him, "What line of study are you pursuing?" He replied that he was pursuing a post graduate course in history with a view to a professorship in history. I said, "Then you know that the account of an eye witness differs in marked respects from the account of one who is simply telling what he has heard from others?" "Yes," he replied. I next asked, "Have you carefully read the four Gospel accounts of the resurrection of Christ?" He replied, "I have." "Tell me, have you not noticed clear indications that they were derived from eye witnesses?" "Yes," he replied, "I have

been greatly struck by this in reading the accounts." Any one who carefully and intelligently reads them will be struck with the same fact.

3. The third thing that we notice about these Gospel narratives is *their naturalness, straightforwardness, artlessness and simplicity.*

The accounts, it is true, have to do with the supernatural, but the accounts themselves are most natural. There is a remarkable absence of all attempt at coloring and effect. There is nothing but the simple, straightforward telling of facts as they actually occurred. It frequently happens that when a witness is on the witness stand, the story he tells is so artless, so straightforward, so natural, there is such an entire absence of any attempt at coloring or effect that his testimony bears weight independently of anything we may know of the character or previous history of the witness. As we listen to his story, we say to ourselves, "This man is telling the truth." The weight of this kind of evidence is greatly increased and reaches practical certainty when we have several independent witnesses of this sort, all bearing testimony to the same essential facts, but with varieties of detail, one omitting what another tells, and the third unconsciously reconciling apparent discrepancies between the two. This is the precise case with the four Gospel narratives of the resurrection of Christ. The Gospel writers do not seem to have reflected at all upon the meaning or bearing of many of the facts which they relate. They simply tell right out what they saw in all simplicity and straightforwardness, leaving the philosophizing to others. Dr. William Furness, the great Unitarian scholar and critic, who certainly was not over-much disposed in favor of the supernatural, says, "Nothing can exceed in artlessness and simplicity the four accounts of the first appearance of Jesus after His crucifixion. If these qualities are not discernible here, we must despair of ever being able to discern them anywhere."

Suppose we should find four accounts of the battle of Monmouth. Suppose, furthermore, that nothing decisive was known as to the authorship of these four accounts, but, when we laid them side by side, we found that they were manifestly independent accounts. We found, furthermore, striking indications that they were from eye witnesses. We found them all marked by that artlessness, straightforwardness and simplicity that always carries conviction; we found that, while apparently disagreeing in minor details, they agreed substantially in their account of the battle—even though we had no knowledge of the authorship or date of these accounts, would we not, in the absence of any other accounts, say, “Here is a true account of the battle of Monmouth?” Now this is exactly the case with the four Gospel narratives. Manifestly separate and independent from one another, bearing the clear marks of having been derived from eye witnesses, characterized by an unparalleled artlessness, simplicity and straightforwardness, apparently disagreeing in minor details, but in perfect agreement as to the great central facts related. If we are fair and honest, if we follow the canons of evidence followed in court, if we follow any sound and sane law of literary and historical criticism, are we not logically driven to say, “Here is a true account of the resurrection of Jesus.” Here again we might rest our case and call the resurrection of Jesus from the dead proven, but we go on still further:

4. The next thing we notice is the *unintentional evidence of words, phrases, and accidental details*.

It oftentimes happens that when a witness is on the stand, the unintentional evidence that he bears by words and phrases which he uses, and by accidental details which he introduces, is more convincing than his direct testimony, because it is not the testimony of the witness, but a testimony of the truth to itself. The Gospel accounts abound in evidence of this sort.

Take, as the first instance, the fact that in all the Gospel records of the resurrection, we are given to understand that Jesus was not at first recognized by His disciples when He appeared to them after His resurrection, e. g., Luke 24:16; John 21:4. We are not told why this was so, but if we will think awhile over it, we will soon discover why it was so. But the Gospel narratives simply record the fact without attempting to explain it. If the stories were fictitious, they certainly would never have been made up in this way, for the writer would have seen at once the objection that would arise in the minds of those who did not wish to believe in His resurrection, that is, that it was not really Jesus Whom the disciples saw. Why, then, is the story told in this way? For the self-evident reason that the evangelists were not making up a story for effect, but simply recording events precisely as they occurred. This is the way in which it occurred, therefore this is the way in which they told it. It is not a fabrication of imaginary incidents, but an exact record of facts carefully observed and accurately recorded.

Take a second instance: In all the Gospel records of the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection, there is not a single recorded appearance to an enemy or opponent of Christ. All His appearances were to those who were already believers. Why this was so we can easily see by a little thought, but nowhere in the Gospels are we told why it was so. If the stories had been fabricated, they certainly would never have been made up in this way. If the Gospels were, as some would have us believe, fabrications constructed one hundred, two hundred, or three hundred years after the alleged events recorded, when all the actors were dead and gone and no one could gainsay any lies told, Jesus would have been represented as appearing to Caiaphas, and Annas, and Pilate, and Herod, and confounding them by His re-appearance from the dead. But there is no suggestion even of anything of this kind in the Gospel stories. Every appearance is to

one who is already a believer. Why is this so? For the self-evident reason that this was the way that things occurred, and the Gospel narratives are not concerned with producing a story for effect, but simply with recording events precisely as they occurred and as they were observed.

We find still another instance in the fact that the recorded appearances of Jesus after His resurrection were only occasional. He would appear in the midst of His disciples and disappear, and not be seen again perhaps for several days. Why this was so, we can easily think out for ourselves—He was evidently seeking to wean His disciples from their old-time communion with Him in the body, and to prepare them for the communion with Himself in the Spirit that was to follow in the days that were to come. We are not, however, told this in the Gospel narratives. We are left to discover it for ourselves, and this is all the more significant for that reason. It is doubtful if the disciples themselves realized the meaning of the facts. If they had been making up the story to produce effect, they would have represented Jesus as being with them constantly, as living with them, eating and drinking with them, day after day. Why then is the story told as recorded in the four Gospels? Because this is the way in which it had all occurred. The Gospel writers are simply concerned with giving the exact representation of the facts as witnessed by themselves and others.

We find another very striking instance in what is recorded concerning the words of Jesus to Mary at their first meeting. (John 20:17.) Jesus is recorded as saying to Mary, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father." We are not told why Jesus said this to Mary. We are left to discover the reason for it if we can, and the commentators have had a great deal of trouble in discovering it. Their explanations vary widely one from another. I have a reason of my own which I have never seen in any commentary, but which I am persuaded is the true reason, but it would prob-

ably be difficult to persuade others that it was the true reason. Why then is this little utterance of Jesus put in the Gospel record without a word of explanation, and which it has taken eighteen centuries to explain, and which is not altogether satisfactorily explained yet? Certainly a writer making up a story would not put in a little detail like that without apparent meaning and without an attempt at an explanation of it. Stories that are made up are made up for a purpose; details that are inserted are inserted for a purpose, a purpose more or less evident, but eighteen centuries of study have not been able to find out the purpose why this was inserted. Why then do we find it here? Because this is exactly what happened. This is what Jesus said; this is what Mary heard Jesus say; this is what Mary told, and therefore this is what John recorded. We cannot have a fiction here, but an accurate record of words spoken by Jesus after His resurrection.

We find still another instance in John 20:4-6: "So they ran both together; and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie." This is all in striking keeping with what we know of the men from other sources. Mary, returning hurriedly from the tomb, bursts in upon the two disciples and cries, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him." John and Peter sprang to their feet and ran at the top of their speed to the tomb. John, the younger of the two disciples (it is all the more striking that the narrative does not tell us here that he was the younger of the two disciples), was fleeter of foot and outran Peter and reached the tomb first, but man of retiring and reverent disposition that he was (we are not told this here but we know it from a study of his personality as revealed elsewhere) he did not

enter the tomb, but simply stooped down and looked in. Impetuous but older Peter comes lumbering on behind as fast as he can, but when once he reaches the tomb, he never waits a moment outside but plunges headlong in. Is this made up, or, is it life? He was indeed a literary artist of consummate ability who had the skill to make this up if it did not occur just so. There is incidentally a touch of local coloring in the report. When one visits today the tomb which scholars now accept as the real burial place of Jesus, he will find himself unconsciously obliged to stoop down in order to look in.

Still another instance is found in John 21:7: "Therefore, that disciple whom Jesus loved saith to Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea." Here again we have the unmistakable marks of truth and life. The Apostles had gone at Jesus' command into Galilee to meet Him there, but Jesus does not at once appear. Simon Peter, with the fisherman's passion still stirring in his bosom says, "I go a-fishing." The others replied, "We also go with thee." They fished all night, and, with characteristic fishermen's luck, caught nothing. In the early dawn Jesus stands upon the shore, but the disciples did not recognize Him in the dim light. Jesus calls to them, "Children, have ye any meat?" And they answer, "No." He bids them cast the net on the right side of the ship and they will find. When the cast was made, they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. In an instant, John, the man of quick spiritual perception, says, "It is the Lord." No sooner does Peter, the man of impulsive action, hear it than he grasps his fisher's coat, casts it about his naked form and throws himself overboard and strikes out for shore to reach his Lord. Is this made up, or, is it life? This is not fiction. If some unknown author of the fourth Gospel made this up, he is the master literary artist of the ages, and we

should take down every other name from our literary pantheon and place him above them all.

We find a still more touching instance in John 20:15: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Here is surely a touch that surpasses the art of any man of that day or any other day. Mary had gone into the city and notified John and Peter that she had found the sepulchre empty. They start on a run for the sepulchre. As Mary has already made the journey twice, they easily far outstrip her, but with heavy heart and slow and weary feet, she makes her way back to the tomb. Peter and John have long gone when she reaches it, broken-hearted, thinking that not only has her beloved Lord been slain, but that His tomb has been desecrated. She stands without weeping. There are two angels sitting in the tomb, one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. But the grief-stricken woman has no eye for angels. They say unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She replies, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." A rustle in the leaves at her back and she turns around to see who is coming. She sees Jesus standing there, but, blinded by tears and despair, she does not recognize her Lord. Jesus also says to her, "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She, supposing it to be the gardener who is talking to her, says, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away." Now remember who it is that makes the offer, and what she offers to do; a weak woman offers to carry a full grown man away. Of course, she could not do it, but how true to a woman's love that always forgets its weakness and never stops at impossibilities. There is something to be done and she says, "I will do it," "Tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him

away." Is this made up? Never! This is life; this is reality; this is truth.

We find another instance in Mark 16:7: "But go your way, tell His disciples *and Peter* that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you." What I would have you notice here are the two words, "*and Peter.*" Why "*and Peter?*" Was not Peter one of the disciples? Surely he was, the very head of the apostolic company. Why then, "*and Peter?*" No explanation is given in the text, but reflection shows it was the utterance of love toward the despondent, despairing disciple who had thrice denied his Lord. If the message had been simply to the disciples Peter would have said, "Yes, I was once a disciple, but I can no longer be counted such. I thrice denied my Lord on that awful night with oaths and curses. It does not mean me." But our tender compassionate Lord through His angelic messenger sends the message, "Go tell His disciples, and whoever you tell, be sure you tell poor, weak, faltering, backslidden, broken-hearted Peter." Is this made up, or is this a real picture of our Lord? I pity the man who is so dull that he can imagine this is fiction. Incidentally let it be noted that this is recorded only in the Gospel of Mark, which, as is well known, is Peter's Gospel. As Peter dictated to Mark one day what he should record, with tearful eyes and grateful heart he would turn to him and say, "Mark, be sure you put that in, 'Tell His disciples *and Peter.*'"

Take still another instance in John 20:27-29: "Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Note here two things; the action of Thomas and the rebuke of Jesus. Each is too characteristic to be attributed to the

art of some master of fiction. Thomas had not been with the disciples at the first appearance of our Lord. A week had passed by. Another Lord's Day had come. This time Thomas makes sure of being present; if the Lord is to appear, he will be there. If he had been like some of our modern doubters, he would have taken pains to be away, but, doubter though he was, he was an honest doubter and wanted to know. Suddenly Jesus stands in the midst. He says to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands, and reach thither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless but believing." At last Thomas' eyes are opened. His faith long dammed back bursts every barrier and weeping onward carries Thomas to a higher height than any other disciple had as yet reached—exultingly and adoringly he cries, as he looks up into the face of Jesus, "My Lord and My God!" Then Jesus tenderly, but searchingly, rebukes him. "Thomas," He says, "because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they [who are so eager to find and so quick to see, and so ready to accept the truth, that they do not wait for actual visible demonstration but are ready to take truth on sufficient testimony] that have not seen and yet have believed." Is this made up, or is this life? Is it a record of facts as they occurred, or a fictitious production of some master artist?

Take still another instance: In John 21:15-17 we read: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep. He saith unto him *the third time*, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter *was grieved because He said unto him the third time*, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things;

Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep." Note especially here the words, "Peter was grieved because He said unto him *the third time*, Lovest thou Me?" Why did Jesus ask Peter three times, "Lovest thou Me?" And why was Peter grieved because Jesus did ask him three times? We are not told in the text, but, if we read it in the light of Peter's thrice repeated denial of his Lord, we will understand it. As Peter had denied his Lord thrice, Jesus three times gave Peter an opportunity to reassert his love. But this, tender as it was, brings back to Peter that awful night when in the courtyard of Annas and Caiaphas, he thrice denied his Lord, and "Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me." Is this made up? Did the writer make it up with this fact in view? If he did, he surely would have mentioned it. It cannot have been made up. It is not fiction. It is simply reporting what actually occurred. The accurate truthfulness of the record comes out even more strikingly in the Greek than in the English version. Two different words are used for "love." Jesus, in asking Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" uses a strong word denoting the higher form of love. Peter, replying, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," uses a weaker word, but one denoting a more tender form of love. Jesus, the second time uses the stronger word, and the second time in his reply Peter uses the weaker word. In His third question, Jesus comes down to Peter's level and uses the weaker word that Peter had used from the beginning. Then Peter replies, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," using the same weaker word. This cannot be fiction. It is accurately reported fact.

Take still another instance: In John 20:16 we read, "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." What a delicate touch of nature we have here! Mary is standing outside the tomb overcome with grief. She has not recognized her

Lord, though He has spoken to her. She has mistaken Him for the gardener. She has said, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Then Jesus utters just one word. He says, "Mary." As that name came trembling on the morning air, uttered with the old familiar tone, spoken as no one else had ever spoken it but He, in an instant her eyes were opened. She falls at His feet and tries to clasp them, and looks up into His face, and cries, "Rabboni, my Master." Is this made up? Impossible! This is life. *This is Jesus, and this is the woman who loved Him. No unknown author of the second, third, or fourth century, could have produced such a masterpiece as this. We stand here unquestionably face to face with reality, with life, with Jesus and Mary as they actually were.

One more important illustration: In John 20:7 we read, "And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." How strange that such a little detail as this should be added to the story with absolutely no attempt at explaining. But how deeply significant this little unexplained detail is. Recall the circumstances. Jesus is dead. For three days and three nights his body is lying cold and silent in the sepulchre, as truly dead as any body was ever dead, but at last the appointed hour has come, the breath of God sweeps through the sleeping and silent clay, and in that supreme moment of His own earthly life, that supreme moment of human history, when Jesus rises triumphant over death and grave and Satan, there is no excitement upon His part, but with that same majestic self-composure and serenity that marked His whole career, that same Divine calm that He displayed upon storm-tossed Galilee, when His affrighted disciples shook Him from His slumbers and said, "Lord, carest thou not that we perish?" and He arose serenely on the deck of the tossing vessel and said to the wild, tempestuous waves and

winds, "Be still," and there was a great calm: so now again in this sublime, this awful moment, He does not excitedly tear the napkin from His face and fling it aside, but absolutely without human haste or flurry, or disorder, He unties it calmly from His head, rolls it up and lays it away in an orderly manner in a place by itself. Was that made up? Never! We do not behold here an exquisite masterpiece of the romancer's art; we read here the simple narrative of a matchless detail in a unique life that was actually lived here upon earth, a life so beautiful that one cannot read it with an honest and open mind without feeling the tears coming into his eyes.

But some one will say, all these are little things. True, and it is from that very fact that they gain much of their significance. It is just in such little things that fiction would disclose itself. Fiction displays itself different from fact in the minute; in the great outstanding outlines you can make fiction look like truth, but when you come to examine it minutely and microscopically, you will soon detect that it is not reality but fabrication. But the more microscopically we examine the Gospel narratives, the more we become impressed with their truthfulness. There is an artlessness and naturalness and self-evident truthfulness in the narratives, down to the minutest detail, that surpasses all the possibilities of art.

The third line of proof that the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ are exact statements of historic fact, is

III. THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

There are certain proven and admitted facts that demand the resurrection of Christ to account for them.

1. Beyond a question, the foundation truth preached in the early years of the Church's history was the resurrection. This was the one doctrine upon which the Apostles were ever

ringing the changes. Whether Jesus did actually rise from the dead or not, it is certain that the one thing that the Apostles constantly proclaimed was that He had risen. Why should the Apostles use this as the very corner-stone of their creed, if not well attested and firmly believed?

But this is not all: They laid down their lives for this doctrine. Men never lay down their lives for a doctrine which they do not firmly believe. They stated that they had seen Jesus after His resurrection, and rather than give up their statement, they laid down their lives for it. Of course, men may die for error and often have, but it was for error that they firmly believed. In this case they would have known whether they had seen Jesus or not, and they would not merely have been dying for error but dying for a statement which they knew to be false. This is not only incredible but impossible. Furthermore, if the Apostles really firmly believed, as is admitted, that Jesus rose from the dead, they had some facts upon which they founded their belief. These would have been the facts that they would have related in recounting the story. They certainly would not have made up a story out of imaginary incidents when they had real facts upon which they founded their belief. But if the facts were as recounted in the Gospels, there is no possible escaping the conclusion that Jesus actually arose. Still further, if Jesus had not arisen, there would have been evidence that He had not. His enemies would have sought and found this evidence, but the Apostles went up and down the very city where He had been crucified and proclaimed right to the faces of His slayers that He had been raised and no one could produce evidence to the contrary. The very best they could do was to say the guards went to sleep and the disciples stole the body while the guards slept. Men who bear evidence of what happens while they are asleep are not usually regarded as credible witnesses. Further still, if the Apostles had stolen the body, they would have known it them-

selves and would not have been ready to die for what they knew to be a fraud.

2. Another known fact is the change in the day of rest. The early church came from among the Jews. From time immemorial the Jews had celebrated the seventh day of the week as their day of rest and worship, but we find the early Christians in the Acts of the Apostles, and also in early Christian writings, assembling on the first day of the week. Nothing is more difficult of accomplishment than the change in a holy day that has been celebrated for centuries and is one of the most cherished customs of the people. What is especially significant about the change is that it was changed by no express decree but by general consent. Something tremendous must have occurred that led to this change. The Apostles asserted that what had occurred on that day was the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and that is the most rational explanation. In fact it is the only reasonable explanation of the change.

3. But the most significant fact of all is the change in the disciples themselves, the moral transformation. At the time of the crucifixion of Christ, we find the whole apostolic company filled with blank and utter despair. We see Peter, the leader of the apostolic company, denying his Lord three times with oaths and cursings, but a few days later we see this same man, filled with a courage that nothing could shake. We see him standing before the council that had condemned Jesus to death and saying to them, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand before you whole" (Acts 4:10). A little further on when commanded by the council not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus, we hear Peter and John answering, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the

things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19, 20). A little later still after arrest and imprisonment, in peril of death, when sternly arraigned by the council, we hear Peter and the Apostles answering their demand that they should be silent regarding Jesus, with the words, "We ought to obey God rather than man. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.* Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things" (Acts 5:29-32). Something tremendous must have occurred to account for such a radical and astounding moral transformation as this. Nothing short of the fact of the resurrection and of their having seen the risen Lord will explain it.

These unquestionable facts are so impressive and so conclusive that even infidel and Jewish scholars now admit that the Apostles believed that Jesus rose from the dead. Even Ferdinand Baur, father of the Tübingen School, admitted this. Even David Strauss, who wrote the most masterly "Life of Jesus" from the rationalistic standpoint that was ever written, said, "Only this much need be acknowledged that the Apostles firmly believed that Jesus had arisen." Strauss evidently did not wish to admit any more than he had to but he felt compelled to admit this much. Schenkel went even further and said, "It is an indisputable fact that in the early morning of the first day of the week following the crucifixion, the grave of Jesus was found empty. It is a second fact that the disciples and other members of the apostolic communion were convinced that Jesus was seen after the crucifixion." These admissions are fatal to the rationalists who make them. The question at once arises, "Whence these convictions and belief?" Renan attempted an answer by saying that "the passion of a hallucinated woman (Mary) gives to the world a resurrected God." (Renan's "Life of Jesus," page 357.) By this, Renan means that Mary was in love

with Jesus; that after His crucifixion, brooding over it, in the passion of her love, she dreamed herself into a condition where she had a hallucination that she had seen Jesus risen from the dead. She reported her dream as a fact, and thus the passion of a hallucinated woman gave to the world a resurrected God. But the reply to all this is self-evident, namely, the passion of a hallucinated woman was not competent to this task. Remember the make-up of the apostolic company; in the apostolic company were a Matthew and a Thomas to be convinced, outside was a Saul of Tarsus to be converted. The passion of a hallucinated woman will not convince a stubborn unbeliever like Thomas, nor a Jewish tax-gatherer like Matthew. Whoever heard of a tax-gatherer, and most of all of a Jewish tax-gatherer, who could be imposed upon by the passion of a hallucinated woman? Neither will the passion of a hallucinated woman convince a fierce and conscientious enemy like Saul of Tarsus. We must look for some saner explanation than this. Strauss tried to account for it by inquiring whether the appearance might not have been visionary. Strauss has had, and still has, many followers in this theory. But to this we reply, first of all, there was no subjective starting point for such visions. The Apostles, so far from expecting to see the Lord, would scarcely believe their own eyes when they did see Him. Furthermore, whoever heard of eleven men having the same vision at the same time, to say nothing of five hundred men (1 Cor. 15:6) having the same vision at the same time. Strauss demands of us that we give up one reasonable miracle and substitute five hundred impossible miracles in its place. Nothing can surpass the credulity of unbelief.

The third attempt at an explanation is that Jesus was not really dead when they took Him from the cross, that His friends worked over Him and brought Him back to life, and what was supposed to be the appearance of the raised Lord

was the appearance of one who never had been really dead and was now merely resuscitated. This theory of Paulus has been brought forward and revamped by various rationalistic writers in our own time and seems to be a favorite theory of those who today would deny the reality of our Lord's resurrection. To sustain this view, appeal has been made to the short time Jesus hung upon the cross and to the fact that history tells us of one in the time of Josephus taken down from the cross and nursed back to life. But to this we answer: (1). Remember the events preceding the crucifixion; the agony in the garden of Gethsemane; the awful ordeal of the four trials; the scourging and the consequent physical condition in which all this left Jesus. Remember too the water and the blood that poured from His pierced side. (2). In the second place, we reply, His enemies would have taken, and did take, all necessary precautions against such a thing as this happening. (John 19:34.) (3). We reply, in the third place, if Jesus had been merely resuscitated, He would have been so weak, such an utter physical wreck, that His re-appearance would have been measured at its real value, and the moral transformation in the disciples, for which we are trying to account, would still remain unaccounted for. The officer in the time of Josephus, who is cited in proof, though brought back to life, was an utter physical wreck. (4). We reply in the fourth place, if brought back to life, the Apostles and friends of Jesus, who are the ones who are supposed to have brought Him back to life, would have known how they brought Him back to life, and that it was not a case of resurrection but of resuscitation, and the main fact to be accounted for, namely, the change in themselves would remain unaccounted for. The attempted explanation is an explanation that does not explain. (5). In the fifth place, we reply, that the moral difficulty is the greatest of all, for if it was really a case of resuscitation, then Jesus tried to palm Himself off as one risen from the dead, when in reality He was nothing

of the sort. In that case, He would be an arch-impostor, and the whole Christian system rests on a fraud as its ultimate foundation. Is it possible to believe that such a system of religion as that of Jesus Christ, embodying such exalted principles and precepts of truth, purity and love, "originated in a deliberately planned fraud"? No one whose own heart is not cankered by fraud and trickery can believe Jesus to have been an impostor, and His religion to have been founded upon fraud. A leader of the rationalistic forces in England has recently tried to prove the theory that Jesus was only apparently dead by appealing to the fact that when the side of Jesus was pierced blood came forth and asks, "Can a dead man bleed?" To this the sufficient reply is that when a man dies of what is called in popular language, a broken heart, the blood escapes into the pericardium, and after standing there for a short time it separates into serum (the water) and clot (the red corpuscles, blood), and thus if a man were dead, if his side were pierced by a spear, and the point of the spear entered the pericardium, "blood and water" would flow out just as the record states it did, and what is brought forth as a proof that Jesus was not really dead, is in reality a proof that He was, and an illustration of the minute accuracy of the story. It could not have been made up in this way, if it were not actual fact.

We have eliminated all other possible suppositions. We have but one left, namely, Jesus really was raised from the dead the third day as recorded in the four Gospels. The desperate straits to which those who attempt to deny it are driven are themselves proof of the fact.

We have then several independent lines of argument pointing decisively and conclusively to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Some of them taken separately prove the fact, but taken together they constitute an argument that makes doubt of the resurrection of Christ impossible to the candid mind. Of course, if one is determined not to

believe, no amount of proof will convince him. Such a man must be left to his own deliberate choice of error and falsehood; but any man who really desires to know the truth and is willing to obey it at any cost must accept the resurrection of Christ as an historically proven fact.

A brilliant lawyer in New York City some time ago spoke to a prominent minister of that city asking him if he really believed that Christ rose from the dead. The minister replied that he did, and asked the privilege of presenting the proof to the lawyer. The lawyer took the material offered in proof away and studied it. He returned to the minister, and said, "I am convinced that Jesus really did rise from the dead. But," he then added, "I am no nearer being a Christian than I was before. I thought that the difficulty was with my head. I find that it is really with my heart."

There is really but one weighty objection to the doctrine that Jesus arose from the dead, and that is, "There is no conclusive evidence that any other ever arose." To this a sufficient answer would be, even if it were certain that no other ever arose, it would not at all prove that Jesus did not arise, for the life of Jesus was unique, His nature was unique, His character was unique, His mission was unique, His history was unique, and it is not to be wondered at, but rather to be expected, that the issue of such a life should also be unique. However, all this objection is simply David Hume's exploded argument against the possibility of the miraculous revamped. According to this argument, no amount of evidence can prove a miracle, because miracles are contrary to all experience. But are miracles contrary to all experience? To start out by saying that they are is to beg the very question at issue. They may be outside of your experience and mine, they may be outside the experience of this entire generation, but your experience and mine and the experience of this entire generation is not "all experience." Every student of geology and astronomy knows that things

have occurred in the past which are entirely outside of the experience of the present generation. Things have occurred within the last ten years that are entirely outside of the experience of the fifty years preceding it. True science does not start with an *a priori* hypothesis that certain things are impossible, but simply examines the evidence to find out what has actually occurred. It does not twist its observed facts to make them accord with *a priori* theories, but seeks to make its theories accord with the facts as observed. To say that miracles are impossible, and that no amount of evidence can prove a miracle, is to be supremely unscientific. Within the past few years, in the domain of chemistry for example, discoveries have been made regarding radium which seemed to run counter to all previous observations regarding chemical elements and to well established chemical theories. But the scientist has not therefore said that these discoveries about radium cannot be true; he has rather gone to work to find out where the trouble was in his previous theories. The observed and recorded facts in the case before us prove to a demonstration that Jesus rose from the dead, and true science must accept this conclusion and conform its theories to this observed fact. The fact of the actual and literal resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead cannot be denied by any man who will study the evidence in the case with a candid desire to find what the fact is, and not merely to support an *a priori* theory.

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONVERSION AND APOSTLESHIP OF ST. PAUL

BY LORD LYTTELTON

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The object of this paper is to present in an abbreviated form the famous argument of Lord Lyttelton in defense of Christianity based on the conversion of the Apostle Paul. A few words about the man himself and about the interesting circumstances in which this treatise was written will properly introduce the subject.

George Lyttelton was born at Hagley, Worcestershire, England, January 17, 1709, and died on Tuesday morning, August 22, 1773, aged sixty-four years. He belonged to a distinguished "family of long descent and gentle blood, dwelling for centuries on the same spot." Educated at Eton and Oxford, he soon afterwards entered Parliament, "and for many years the name of George Lyttelton was seen in every account of every debate in the House of Commons." From this, he advanced successively to the position of lord commissioner of the treasury, and of chancellor of the exchequer, after which he was raised to the peerage. He was also a man of letters and his closing years were devoted almost wholly to literary pursuits. He was a writer of verse as well as prose and Dr. Samuel Johnson has furnished us with his biography in his "Lives of the Poets." Outside of his books, which comprise nine octavo volumes, his *Memoirs and Correspondence* make two additional volumes that were compiled and edited by Robert Phillimore in 1845.

The eighteenth century was the darkest period religiously in the history of England since the time of the Reformation. It was the age of the great deists, agnostics, rationalists and unbelievers, when "all men of rank are [were] thought to be infidels." Like so many of the literary men of his time, George Lyttelton and his friend Gilbert West were led at first to reject the Christian religion. On the Sabbath forenoon before he died, in an interview with Dr. Johnson, Lyttelton said, "When I first set out in the world I had friends who endeavored to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me," etc. In his biography of Lord Lyttelton, Dr. Johnson adds, "He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt conversation, entertained doubts of the truth of Christianity." His intimacy with Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, Pope and others of the same kind had no doubt influenced him in this direction. Rev. T. T. Biddolph tells us that both Lyttelton and West, "men of acknowledged talents, had imbibed the principles of infidelity. * * * Fully persuaded that the Bible was an imposture, they were determined to expose the cheat. Lord Lyttelton chose the Conversion of Paul and Mr. West the Resurrection of Christ for the subject of hostile criticism. Both sat down to their respective tasks full of prejudice; but the result of their separate attempts was, that they were both converted by their efforts to overthrow the truth of Christianity. They came together, not as they expected, to exult over an imposture exposed to ridicule, but to lament over their own folly and to felicitate each other on their joint conviction that the Bible was the word of God. Their able inquiries have furnished two of the most valuable treatises in favor of revelation, one entitled 'Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul' and the other 'Observations on the Resurrection of Christ.'" West's book was the first published. Lyttelton's work appeared at first anonymously in 1747, when he was thirty-eight years of age. The edition which lies before me contains seventy-eight

compact pages. It is addressed in the form of a letter to Gilbert West. In the opening paragraph he says, "The conversion and apostleship of St. Paul alone, duly considered, was of itself a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation." Dr. Johnson remarked that it is a treatise "to which infidelity had never been able to fabricate a specious answer." Dr. Philip Doddridge, who became Lyttelton's most intimate religious friend, speaks of it as "masterly," and, "as perfect in its kind as any our age has produced." Testimonials of this kind might be multiplied indefinitely.

Let us now turn to an examination of the book itself. Lyttelton naturally begins by bringing before us all the facts that we have in the New Testament regarding the conversion of St. Paul; the three accounts given in the Acts; what we have in Galatians, Philippians, Timothy, Corinthians, Colossians and in other places. (Acts 9:22-26; Gal. 1:11-16; Phil. 3:4-8; 1 Tim. 1:12, 13; 1 Cor. 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1, etc.) Then he lays down four propositions which he considers exhaust all the possibilities in the case.

1. Either Paul was "an impostor who said what he knew to be false, with an intent to deceive;" or
2. He was an enthusiast who imposed on himself by the force of "an overheated imagination;" or
3. He was "deceived by the fraud of others;" or, finally,
4. What he declared to be the cause of his conversion did all really happen; "and, therefore the Christian religion is a divine revelation."

I. PAUL NOT AN IMPOSTOR

More than half his argument (about forty pages) is devoted to the first of these propositions, which is really the key to the whole situation. Is this story of Paul's conversion so often repeated in Acts and Epistles a fabrication, put forth by a designing man with the deliberate purpose and intention of deceiving?

Lyttelton at once raises the question of motive. What could have induced him while on his way to Damascus, filled with implacable hatred against this whole sect, to turn around and become a disciple of Christ?

1. Was it wealth?

No, all the wealth was in the keeping of those whom he had forsaken; the poverty was on the side of those with whom he now identified himself. So poor had they been, that those among them possessed of any little property sold whatever belonged to them in order to provide for the dire necessities of the rest. Indeed, one of the burdens afterwards laid upon Paul was to collect means for those who were threatened with starvation. Such was the humble condition of these early Christians, that he often refused to take anything from them even for the bare necessities of life, but labored himself to provide for his scanty needs. To the Corinthians, he writes, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and we toil working with our hands." (1 Cor. 4:11, 12. See also 2 Cor. 12:14; 1 Thess. 2:4-9; 2 Thess. 3:8, etc.) In his farewell to the elders of Ephesus, he appeals to them as knowing it to be true that, "I coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me" (Acts 20:33, 34). He forsook the great Jewish hierarchy with its gorgeous temple and its overflowing treasuries, where his zeal in putting down the hated sect of the Nazarene would have been almost certainly rewarded with a fortune. He cast in his lot among the poverty-stricken disciples of Jesus Christ, among whom it was his ambition to be poor. Near the end of his life he presents to us the picture of an old man shivering in a Roman dungeon and pathetically asking for a cloak to be sent him to cover his naked and suffering limbs during the severity of an Italian winter.

2. Was it reputation?

No; those with whom he united were held in universal contempt; their Leader had been put to death as a criminal among thieves; the chiefs of the cause that he had espoused were illiterate men. On the other hand, the wisest and the greatest men in all the land indignantly rejected the teachings of this new sect. The preaching of Christ crucified was to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. There was no reputation for the great disciple of Gamaliel in parting with his splendid honors and identifying himself with a lot of ignorant fishermen. He would only be execrated as a deserter and betrayer of the Jewish cause, and he might rest assured that the same bloody knife that slew the Shepherd of the scattered flock would soon be unsheathed against himself. All the reputation that he had so zealously built up was gone the hour that he went over to the new religion, and from that day on contempt was his portion. He was accounted as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things. (1 Cor. 4:13.)

3. Was it power he was after?

We know what men have done to get into positions of prominence and dominion over their fellows. Mahomet, the popes, and many others, put forth spiritual claims so as to promote thereby their own temporal ends. How was it with Paul? His whole career was marked by a complete absence of all self-seeking. He had no eye to worldly ambitions. He interfered with nothing, "in government or civil affairs; he meddled not with legislation; he formed no commonwealths; he raised no seditions; he affected no temporal power." He assumed no pre-eminence over other Christians. He regarded himself as not worthy to be called an apostle, as less than the least of all saints, as the chief of sinners. Those engaged in like work he called "fellow-laborers" and "fellow-servants." Even if the truth was spread by those hostile to him, through "envy and strife," so long as Christ was proclaimed, "therein

I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:18). He did not lord it over the churches, even over those that he himself had founded. To the Pauline party in Corinth he exclaims, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:13). "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as *your servants* for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5). Those who, from selfish motives seek for influence over people pander to them and flatter them [as, e. g. did Absalom]. There was nothing of this with Paul. He rebuked the churches unsparingly for their sins, and did not hesitate, if need be, to incur their displeasure. Disclaiming all pre-eminence and position and power, he preached Christ and Him crucified as the head, and hid and buried self behind the cross. Earth to him was nothing. His eye was fixed on "the recompense of reward" (Heb. 11:26).

4. *Was his motive the gratification of any other passion?*

Impostors have pretended to receive divine revelations as a pretext in order that they might indulge in loose conduct. Was it so here? No; for all Paul's teachings were in the most absolute antagonism to any such purpose. "His writings breathe nothing but the strictest morality, obedience to magistrates, order, and government, with the utmost abhorrence of all licentiousness, idleness, or loose behavior under the cloak of religion." Writing to the Thessalonians, he utters the challenge, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblameably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:10). "We wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we took advantage of no man" (2 Cor. 7:2). The whole teaching of the Apostle is in the sternest and most uncompromising hostility to everything but the highest and holiest ideals.

5. *Was it a pious fraud?*

That is to say, did Paul pretend to receive a divine revelation in order to give him prestige in advancing the teachings of Christianity? But Christianity was the one thing he had

set out to destroy. To become a Christian was to incur the hatred, the contempt, the torments and the violent deaths suffered by Christians in that day. Why then this sudden change in Paul's own views regarding the unpopular teachings of the Nazarene? Would he have endured "the loss of all things" and exulted over it, for what he knew was a fraud? Would he have spent a life of the most arduous toil to induce others to make every earthly sacrifice while he knew that behind it all he was practising a delusion? It would be an imposture as unprofitable as it was perilous, both to himself the deceiver and to the others whom he deceived. The theory confutes itself. Only the sternest conviction that he had received a divine revelation could have induced Paul to pass through what he himself had suffered, or to have asked others to do the same. "If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable" (1 Cor. 15:19).

But had he practiced a deception, he could not have successfully carried it out. Men sometimes act capriciously. Suppose that Paul "just did it" without any motive that can be imagined; then he must have ignominiously failed in his attempt to perpetuate such a fraud. How could he, e. g., have become such an adept in the mysteries and secrets of the new religion as to be an authority and an apostle of it, if he had to depend for his special knowledge on information received from men who knew well by bitter experience that he was their capital enemy? It must have come in another way, and his own account makes it plain. "For neither did I receive it [the Gospel] from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). Had he fabricated the story of his conversion he would certainly have located it in a place so remote or hidden that there could be no witnesses to refute. [Joe Smith, e. g., and the golden plates of the Book of Mormon.] Instead of that the miracle of Paul's conversion, with its great light from heaven exceeding the brightness of the sun, is placed in the public highway

near Damascus; at noonday, when their senses could not be deceived, and when all the accompanying soldiers and commissioners were with him on the spot. Had there been a shadow of disproof, how promptly the Jews in Damascus would have nipped the falsehood in the bud by the testimony of the witnesses who were present with Paul at the time. Or, when the Apostle stood on the castle stairs in Jerusalem and told the whole story, why did not the Jewish authorities silence him at once and forever by showing that nothing of the kind had ever taken place, and proved it by the abundant evidence of the competent witnesses who were with him—if it were not true? It was an event that took place before the eyes of the world, and would be made at once a matter of the strictest scrutiny. And the truth of the fact was so incontestably established that it had become a matter of common knowledge. The Jews said the utmost they could against Paul before the Roman court, and yet Paul appealed directly to King Agrippa in presence of Festus as to his own personal knowledge of the truth of the story. “For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner” (Acts 26:26)—“a very remarkable proof both of the notoriety of the fact, and the integrity of the man, who, with so fearless a confidence, could call upon a *king* to give testimony for him, even while he was sitting in judgment upon him.” Moreover, how came it that Ananias went to meet such an enemy in Damascus, if the story of his conversion was made up? If Paul was an impostor, then all his miracles were simply tricks or sleight-of-hand. Nevertheless, he, a despised and hated Jew, set himself to the appalling task of converting the Gentile world—teaching doctrines that shocked every prejudice and at which they were wont to mock in derision. Arrayed against him were the magistrates with their policy and power, the priests with their interests and craft, the people with their prejudice and passions, the philosophers with their pride and

wisdom. Could he by feats of jugglery in presence of a shrewd, hostile people strike Elymas the sorcerer, blind; heal a cripple at Lystra; restore the pythoness at Philippi; shake open with a prayer the doors of a prison; raise the dead to life, etc., so that thousands were converted and great pure churches renouncing all sin and dishonesty, established throughout the Roman world? Our author shows that this would be impossible without divine help and therefore he concludes that he has proven (1) that Paul was not a cheat telling a trumped-up story about his conversion, and (2) if he were, he could not have succeeded.

II. PAUL NOT AN ENTHUSIAST WHO IMPOSED ON HIMSELF

This second argument covers twenty pages. Was Paul a deluded enthusiast whose overheated imagination imposed on him so that he imagined to be true that which had never really taken place? Lord Lyttelton makes an analysis of the elements that enter into the make-up of a man of this type. He finds these to be five.

(1) *Great heat of temper.*

While Paul had intense fervor, like all great men, yet it was everywhere governed by discretion and reason. His zeal was his servant, not the master of his judgment. He possessed consummate tact which proves self-control. In indifferent matters he became "all things to all men;" to the Jews he became a Jew, to them that are without law as without law, to the weak he became weak—all, that he might gain some. (1 Cor. 9:19-23.) "His zeal was eager and warm, but tempered with prudence, and even with the civilities and decors of life, as appears by his behavior to Agrippa, Festus and Felix; not the blind, inconsiderate, indecent zeal of an enthusiast."

(2) *Melancholy.*

He regards this as a prominent mark of misguided zeal. He finds nothing of it in Paul. There is great sorrow over his

former ignorant persecution of the church, but there are no gloomy self-imposed penances such as melancholy fanatics inflict upon themselves. He had a desire to depart and be with Christ, but there was nothing morbid about it. It was all based on the revelation that he already had of the rewards that awaited him in the life to come. He tactfully met the Athenians adroitly claiming to be the interpreter of "The unknown god" whose altar they themselves had erected. He never hesitated to avert injustice by claiming his privileges as a Roman citizen. He was the very antithesis of gloominess. In whatever state he was, he had learned to be content. Neither his actions, nor his writings, nor his interested greeting and salutations, show the slightest tincture of melancholia.

(3) *Ignorance.*

This charge could not be laid up against the Apostle. Brought up at the feet of the great Gamaliel, he appeared to be master not only of Jewish, but also of Greek (and Roman) learning.

(4) *Credulity.*

As a resident of Jerusalem, Paul could not be a stranger to the fame of the miracles wrought by Jesus. He had the facts of the resurrection of our Lord, of Pentecost and all the miracles wrought by the Apostles up till the death of Stephen. Far from being credulous, he had barred his mind against every proof and refused to believe. "Nothing less than the irresistible evidence of *his own senses*, clear from all possibility of doubt, could have overcome his unbelief."

(5) *Vanity or self-conceit.*

Vanity and fanaticism usually go together. Men of this type flatter themselves that on account of their superior worth they are the recipients of extraordinary favors and gifts from God, and of these they make their boast. There is not one word in his Epistles, nor one act recorded in his life, in which the slightest mark of this appears. When compelled to vindicate his apostolic claim from wanton attack he does it effec-

tively, but in the briefest way and with many apologies for being compelled to speak thus of himself. (2 Cor. 11:1-30.) When he had a vision of heaven, he modestly withheld his own name and covered it up in the third person. For fourteen years he observed absolute silence in regard to this special mark of the divine favor. (2 Cor. 12:1-12.) Would this be the way a vain man would act? Neither is Paul that planteth, nor Apollos that watereth, anything, but God who gives the increase. (1 Cor. 3:4-7.) Instead of self-conceit, he writes of himself in terms of the most complete abnegation. Everywhere it is "not I, but the grace of God that was with me." (1 Cor. 15:10.) His modesty appears on every page.

(6) But now suppose that in some way wholly unaccountable, Paul had actually been swept away by enthusiasm at the time, and imposed on himself, by imagining the events that took place. Lyttelton's reply is that such a thing was impossible. He here uses the argument that has since been employed so effectively to dispose of Renan's vision theory of the resurrection of our Lord. In such circumstances men always see what they expect to see. An imagined vision will be in accord with the opinions already imprinted on one's mind. Paul's purpose was clearly fixed. At his own request he had been clothed with authority to persecute the Christians, and he was now on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus on this very errand. He looked upon Christ as an impostor and a blasphemer who had justly been put to death. All his passions were inflamed to the highest degree against His followers. He started on his northward journey "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). "And being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities" (Acts 26:11). "There was the pride of supporting a part he had voluntarily engaged in, and the credit he found it procured him among the chief priests and rulers, whose commission he bore." In these circumstances

a wild enthusiast might indeed imagine he saw a vision, but it would be one urging him onward to do the thing which he had started out to accomplish. With nothing having happened to change his opinions or alter the bent of his mind, it would be as impossible for him, in a moment, to have imagined the complete revolution that is recorded in the New Testament as it would be for a rapid river to "carry a boat against the current of its own stream." We might add, as well expect the mighty rushing river itself, without any cause to stop in its course and rush violently backward up a steep mountain side, as to expect the whole current of Paul's thought and feeling and imagination and purpose to be instantly reversed without any cause. It could not take place. And it would have been just as impossible for all those who were with him to have experienced the same delusion, for they also saw the light above the brightness of the noonday sun and they heard the voice from heaven, although they understood not the words. But suppose it were a meteor that burst upon them? How then account for the words that Paul heard speaking in the Hebrew tongue and the dialogue which followed? How account for his going to a certain spot in Damascus, in accordance with instructions here received? How account for the knowledge that Ananias had, and that led to their interview? How account for the miracle after three days whereby Paul's blindness was healed? And how account for the mighty works and wonders afterward wrought by Paul, all consequent on this first revelation? [Following the suggestion of, perhaps, Krenkel, a New England professor is credited with teaching that at his conversion Paul had simply an epileptic attack. But, had all the company that were with him a like attack at the same instant, for they all saw something? And, moreover, no disorder of this or any other kind can account for the facts in the case. Paul's marvelous life-work revolutionized the history of his age, and his influence is powerfully felt yet, after nearly two thousand years, all

over the world. One is almost tempted to say that if such is the result of an attack of epilepsy, what a pity that such a professor as this had not a similar attack. Then possibly he, too, might yet be heard from in the world.]

III. PAUL WAS NOT DECEIVED BY OTHERS

This third possible solution Lyttelton dismisses with a single page. The fraud of others could not have deceived him; for, (1) It was morally impossible that the disciples of Christ could have thought of such a fraud at the instant of Paul's greatest fury against them.

(2) It was physically impossible for them to do it. Could they produce a light brighter than the midday sun; cause him to hear a voice speaking out of that light; make him blind for three days and then return his sight at a word, etc.? There were no Christians around when the miracle of his conversion took place.

(3) No fraud could have produced those subsequent miracles which he himself actively wrought and to which he so confidently appealed in proof of his divine mission.

IV. CHRISTIANITY A DIVINE REVELATION

Our author considers that he has furnished sufficient evidence to show (1) that Paul was not an impostor deliberately proclaiming what he knew to be false with intent to deceive; (2) that he was not imposed upon by an overheated imagination, and (3) that he was not deceived by the fraud of others. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to lay aside the use of our understanding and all the rules of evidence by which facts are determined, we must accept the whole story of Paul's conversion as literally and historically true. We have therefore the supernatural, and the Christian religion is proved to be a revelation from God.

Endeavoring as closely as possible to follow the original, and yet considerably in my own language, I have sought to give

the essence of Lord Lyttelton's matchless argument which has been blessed to thousands of doubting souls. May this outline lead to candid examination, as such an examination should inevitably lead to Him whom Paul saw in the midst of the glory near the gate of Damascus.

CHAPTER V

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

BY REV. H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE, M. A., VICAR OF ST. PAUL'S,
ONSLOW SQUARE, LONDON, AND PREBENDARY OF
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Every man, I believe, if asked to record his own spiritual experiences, would be ready to acknowledge that in his case at least—while he owes very much to the holy zeal of some beloved relation or friend—the work of the Holy Spirit was so wonderfully carried on that none but Divine wisdom could possibly have met and overcome the needs which arose from day to day, from the moment that he was first “convinced” or convicted “of sin” and made to realize his true position before God. At all events, in seeking to record my own personal experiences (as I have been earnestly requested to do, or I would never have thought of so writing) I can only marvel and rejoice at the wonderful way in which God so graciously provided for my spiritual wants as they arose. The one real wonder in such a case is that the love of God could continue to exhibit itself towards one who so ungratefully sought to resist it, till at length He has enabled “even me” to say from the heart:

“Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last hath conquered;
None of self, and all of Thee.”

To my honored parents I owe practically more than I can tell. From my earliest youth I had every spiritual advantage and help. I cannot doubt that, in after days, the instruction received from both their words and example did tend to make me obedient to the voice of God in my soul.

Indeed, I could never give way to temptation without sore prickings of conscience; and especially after my confirmation (for which I was prepared by Dr. Boyd, afterwards Dean of Exeter) I went through pains and sorrows for a time whenever I had sinned against the light.

But neither warnings nor pleadings had any lasting effects, till at length in the autumn of 1856, while I was residing with Mr. Jenkins, Vicar of Hazlewood, Derbyshire, as a private pupil before going to Cambridge, I was invited to stay for a night at Osmaston Manor, the splendid home of the late Mr. Frank Wright. In the evening his son (to be later the Rev. Henry Wright, Hon. Secretary of the Church Missionary Society)—at that time just entering manhood like myself—asked me to go with him on the roof to see the moonlight effects.

His invitation was with a purpose—for he was even then “a master” in soul winning; and though I cannot now remember any particular arguments that he used, I know that he sent me to my room deeply moved with the sense of my own folly and sin in giving my life to the world instead of to God. Next morning he gave me a Bible (for I had not, I believe, taken one to my tutor’s), after writing in it the words of St. Paul to Titus, “Holding fast the faithful word.” That Bible I have and treasure still after forty-seven years of time.

From Osmaston Manor I drove to the town of Derby, and by the time I arrived there I had begun to think myself a fool for listening so readily to one who had indeed convicted me of sin, but had not succeeded in persuading me to accept Christ Jesus as my Lord. Consequently I began (as so many others have done in like circumstances) to wish that I could get rid of the painful impressions produced; and having observed on the town walls that the races were going on at Derby that day, and having a few hours to spare before I was due at my tutor’s, I thought I would see if by my first

visit to the race course I could shake off my sense of heaviness and distress.

As I reached the course the gates were closed to allow a race being run without danger of interruption, and as I came to those gates the horses dashed by, and I saw the only horse-race I have ever witnessed in my life.

At that moment a young man—almost as young as myself—touched his hat and, holding out a small piece of paper to me, said, “I beg pardon, sir; would you kindly read this?”

I thought that he wanted me to read it *for him*, so I took it and looked at it as if to help him. What was my astonishment to find only these (printed) words on the paper: “Reader, if you died tonight, would your soul be IN HELL?”

I simply turned and fled like a terrified coward (as I was), no longer thinking of the races, but only how to escape from the judgment of God and from the awful grasp of the devil, both of which seemed to be equally terrible.

I had some six or seven miles to go to my tutor’s, but I believe I accomplished this distance (uphill) in an hour, so eager was I to flee from the wrath that I had invoked. But still, as it will be observed, I was only convicted of my own folly, and was not resting my soul on Christ. “By the law is the knowledge of sin,” and “The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.” “Knowing the terrors of the law” God had, through His messenger, “persuaded me” so far that I was utterly ashamed of the past; but though the impression was deep, I dare not say what would have happened if the good Lord had not raised up in a remarkable way other helpers for my soul.

My tutor’s kind words now began to impress me, and my good friend Henry Wright wrote me beautiful letters; but (for the few weeks that remained before I was to meet the temptations of Cambridge) perhaps my chief and most valuable helper was a young farmer named Stephens, who

lived in the parish. Him I had hitherto avoided carefully, because I had heard that he had "been converted in a most remarkable manner after living a life of grievous folly and sin," and that "he was always now trying to speak to people about their souls."

Some two or three days after my experience in Derby, I came to one of the so-called "stiles" in Derbyshire, which are simply like a narrow "V." As I put my foot through it, my friend Stephens met me in the stile and suddenly said, "At last we are face to face. Now, why did you avoid me? I wish you would come and read the Bible with me. I want to know more of it, and I am sure you must, too." Here was at least a *third* person who, in the course of one week, had been led of God to offer a special call to my soul! How *could* I resist the voice of grace, mercy and peace?

Thank God, I did not! I went regularly and often, for the short time that remained, to read the Word of God and to pray with my young friend; and though I have never seen him or the stranger of Derby again, I feel it only a duty and a privilege to acknowledge (when asked to narrate my conversion) how much under God I owe to His two humble messengers.

And was the life consistent and spiritual ever afterwards? I am asked. Alas, no! There were many ups and downs, and many declensions from grace. So weak did the Lord see His servant to be, that in mercy and love He had to save me from temptation by allowing a terrible fall of some fifteen or sixteen feet to take place, when I was showing off as champion gymnast soon after I went up to Cambridge. From that time I had to spend three years almost entirely on my couch, passing all my examinations (even that of my ordination) in a recumbent position. From this I twice rose, as if determined to have my own way. One year I gained the University cup for high and broad jumping, and the next I secured the cup for diving and swimming; but on each

occasion I had to go back to my couch to learn of God for another whole year.

Much more could be told of the Lord's merciful dealings with a sinner; but what has been said will, I hope, suffice to prove the truth of the words with which I opened this account, and also to show how entirely the work is the Lord's, though He deigns to make use of His human vessels to carry grace to the soul. To Him let me offer my tribute of thanks, and give all possible glory and praise that He has deigned to take such a poor sinner and number him among His sons, enabling me to say with all my heart, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Jesus Christ is indeed to me all in all, and "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE

As stated in the previous volumes of THE FUNDAMENTALS, this series of books is being sent free to every pastor, evangelist, missionary, theological and college professor, theological student, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. secretary, and editor of a religious paper, throughout the entire English-speaking world, so far as the addresses of all these can be obtained.

Particular attention is hereby called to the following points:

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and £2 1s 1d, respectively.) Do not fail to state plainly which volumes are wanted.

5. Do not send currency or personal checks. *Remit by postoffice money order, or by bank draft* on Chicago, New York, or London, making the same payable to the Testimony Publishing Company.

6. Please bear in mind that we publish nothing except THE FUNDAMENTALS, and do not issue any catalogue.

7. Many who read this paragraph will doubtless know of some person who, if his attention were called to it, would gladly aid in the circulation of THE FUNDAMENTALS in his own or other communities. Ten books, each read by ten persons, would produce abiding results in any church; likewise one hundred books in any community. To what better use in the Lord's service could one dollar, or ten dollars, be placed?

8. The readers of the present volume will rejoice to know that several thousand persons have responded heartily to the "Circle of Prayer" suggestion made in preceding volumes. The names of all these have been recorded, and a special communication sent to each one. We hope to hear from thousands of others—those who are willing to unite in earnest prayer that God's special blessing may rest upon this entire Movement, to the end that it may result in a world-wide revival in the study of the Word and in the deepening of the spiritual life of believers.

In conclusion, we would emphasize once more the *great importance* of writing plainly and briefly, and always giving *full address*—street (or rural route) number, postoffice, state, and (if outside of the United States) country.

Much time and delay will be saved by carefully reading and complying with the foregoing directions.

TESTIMONY PUBLISHING COMPANY,

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WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Reference has been made from time to time to the many thousands of letters received from grateful recipients of THE FUNDAMENTALS, who have written from all parts of the world. These communications have been carefully preserved. Many of them have been read by the "Two Christian Laymen," whose hearts have been greatly encouraged thereby to the further prosecution of an enterprise which many believe will take rank as one of the greatest and most useful of the age.

The following appreciative letter, from a missionary in British Columbia, is one of a vast number more or less similar:

"Dear Sirs: I write to thank you for volumes I, II, III, and IV of THE FUNDAMENTALS so kindly mailed by you to my address and duly received by me, and read and re-read with much thanksgiving. Most unfortunately volumes I and II were lost in the burning of my house on the 7th of September, and I would deem it a great favor if you would replace them. Of all the five hundred dollars worth of books which constituted my little library and were burned, I miss the two little FUNDAMENTALS most. . . .

"And now let me say how much I appreciate this Testimony movement which you have started. I am with it heart and soul. I daily bless those two Christian laymen who have devoted their means to this holy and glorious enterprise. It is a well directed blow at the enemy. Hitherto the critics have had everything their own way. Fenced around with great learning and scholarship, ordinary men have shrunk from attempting any attack upon their position. We have been looking long to Christian scholarship to give us a lead, but its utterance was not only uncertain but tinged with compromise. I have no doubt there were thousands of men, like myself, grieved to the heart before the Lord because of the present-day tendency to do away with the inspired Word of God and the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"I have been shut up here among these Indians for the past twenty-eight years with not a white neighbor within seventy miles of me, and have given much thought to these things. It seems to me we have shown too much deference to human scholarship and mere worldly

wisdom or learning. In all the churches it has been set above the wisdom which cometh from above. Worldly scholarship has been put in place of the Holy Spirit, and now our chief seats of learning have become hotbeds of infidelity and materialism!

"I pray God to bless and prosper your grand enterprise. You are prayed for and shall be prayed for as long as I am in the flesh, so put my name on your circle of prayer. I sincerely hope you will see your way before long to establish some sort of union or league for the enrollment of all those who are on the Lord's side for the maintenance of the faith once delivered to the saints. (See Mal. 3:16.) Let all of us who are on the Lord's side come out and show ourselves."

* * * *

Additional extracts from correspondence will be published in future issues. In the meantime let those who receive these volumes pass on their messages to others, praying at the same time that the seed sown may bear rich fruit in the edifying of Christians and in the conversion of unbelievers.

The Fundamentals

A Testimony to the Truth

"To the Law and to the Testimony"

Isaiah 8:20

Volume VI

Compliments of
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FOREWORD

We rejoice that we are able to place another volume of "The Fundamentals" in the hands of English-speaking Protestant pastors, evangelists, missionaries, theological professors, theological students, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, Y. W. C. A. secretaries, Sunday school superintendents, religious editors, and lay-workers throughout the earth. May it be as abundantly blessed as its predecessors have been by the grace of God, unto the strengthening of saints, unto the defense of the truth against the insidious attacks of the present day, and unto the conversion of sinners.

It goes forth accompanied by the prayers of many thousand Christians, who, in hearty answer to suggestions made in preceding volumes, have formed a Circle of Prayer and are upholding before the throne of grace the work of "The Fundamentals" and of the Committee to which the two Christian laymen have entrusted the editing and publishing of these books. We very earnestly request other faithful believers to join this circle of prayer in order that in answer to believing and united prayer, the truth may "run and be glorified" and a world-wide revival of true religion be started. (James 5:16, last clause.)

We hope that many others will yet join our circle of prayer, and thus strengthen our hands in faith, and we ask all the friends of "The Fundamentals" for a special prayer that He who answers prayer may so lead and guide in the undertaking that lasting results may be brought to pass unto His glory.

All editorial correspondence should be addressed to "The Fundamentals," 123 Huntington Place, Mt. Auburn, Cincinnati, Ohio, U. S. A.

All business correspondence should be addressed to "Testimony Publishing Company," 808 LaSalle Avenue, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

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THE FUNDAMENTALS

VOLUME VI

CHAPTER I

THE TESTIMONY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS TO THE SUPERINTENDING PROVIDENCE OF GOD

BY THE LATE ARTHUR T. PIERSON

God is in creation; cosmos would still be chaos with God left out. He is also in events; the whole of mission history is a mystery until read as His story.

We are now to look at the proofs of a Superintending Providence of God in foreign missions. The word "providence" literally means forevision, and hence, foreaction—preparation for what is foreseen—expressing a divine, invisible rule of this world, including care, control, guidance, as exercised over both the animate and inanimate creation. In its largest scope it involves foreknowledge and foreordination, preservation and administration, exercised in all places and at all times.

For our present purpose the word "providence" may be limited to the divine activity in the entire control of persons and events. This sphere of action and administration, or superintendence, embraces *three* departments: first, the natural or material—*creation*; second, the spiritual or immaterial—*new creation*; and third, the intermediate *history* in which He adapts and adjusts the one to the other, so that even the marred and hostile elements, introduced by sin, are made tributary to the final triumph of redemption. Man's degeneration is corrected in regeneration; the natural made subservient to

the supernatural, and even the wrath of man to the love and grace of God.

MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD

Thus, intermediate between the mystery of creation and the mystery of the new creation lies the mystery of history, linking the other two. We are now briefly to trace the working of the Creator and Ruler of both the matter worlds and time worlds, controlling the blind forces of nature and the intelligent forces of human nature, so as to make all events and agencies serve His ends as Redeemer.

In creation God specially manifests His eternity, power and wisdom; in history, His sovereignty and majesty, justice and righteousness; in redemption, His holiness and benevolence, and, most of all, grace or the voluntary exercise of His love. These positions being granted, we may expect to find, especially in mission history, proofs of God's Superintending Providence, of His three-fold administration as Lawgiver, King, and Judge; in His legislative capacity, commanding and counseling; in His executive capacity, governing and directing; in His judicial capacity, rewarding and punishing. Space allows only a general glance as of a landscape from a mountain top.

GOD'S ENTERPRISE

The work of missions is pre-eminently God's enterprise—has on it the seal of His authority. He calls it His own "visiting of the nations to take out of them a people for His name." Thus the whole course of missions becomes God's march through the ages. He has His *vanguard*, the forerunners that prepare His way, making ready for, and heralding, His approach. He has His *bodyguard*, the immediate attendants that signalize His actual advance, bear His banners, and execute His will; and He has His *rearguard* the resultant movements consequent upon, and complementary to, the rest.

In other words, God's Superintending Providence in missions is seen from three points of view:

1. In the divine preparations for world-wide evangelization.
2. In the divine co-operation in missionary activity.
3. In the divine benediction upon all faithful service.

GOD'S PREPARATIONS

Each of these embraces many particulars which demand more than a rapid glance. God's preparations reached through millenniums. But within the century just closed we see Him moving, opening doors and shaping events, causing the removal of obstacles and the subsidence of barriers, raising up and thrusting forth workers, and furnishing new facilities; and conspicuously in promoting Bible translation and diffusion.

GOD'S CO-OPERATION

His co-operation is seen in the unity and continuity of the work, in the marked fitness between the workers and the work, the new fields and the new facilities. Startling correspondences in mission history reveal His omnipresence and faithfulness, such as synchronisms and successions among His chosen servants, parallel and converging lines of labor, and connecting links of service. All these, and much more, show, behind the lives and deeds of the workmen, a Higher Power that wrought in them both to will and to work.

GOD'S BENEDICTION

Mission history shows also clear traces of the *Judge*. Hindrances and hinderers at times removed by sudden retributive judgments; nations that would not serve His ends declining and even perishing; and churches, cursed with spiritual apathy and lethargy, decaying. On the other hand, His approval has been as marked in compensations for self-denial and in rewards for service; in making martyr blood the seed of new churches, and in lifting to a higher level the individual and church life that has been most unselfishly jealous and zealous of His kingdom.

Pagan philosophers regarded the milky way as an old, dis-used path of the sun, upon which He had left some faint impression of His glorious presence in the golden stardust from His footsteps. To him who prayerfully watches mission history it is God's *Via Lactea*; He has passed that way, and made the place of His feet glorious.

Brevity forbids more than the citation of instances sufficient to demonstrate and illustrate these positions. The evidence of divine co-working will of course be clearest where there is closest adherence to His declared methods of working. As to

DIVINE PREPARATION FOR MISSIONS

what events and what messengers have been His chosen fore-runners? The first half of the eighteenth century seemed more likely to be the mother of iniquity and idolatry than to rock the cradle of world-wide missions. Deism in the pulpit and practical atheism in the pew naturally begot apathy, if not antipathy, toward Gospel diffusion. A hundred and fifty years ago, in the body of the Church, disease was dominant and death seemed imminent. Infidelity and irreligion stalked about, God denying and God defying. In camp and court, at the bar and on the bench, in the home and in the Church, there was a plague of heresy and a moral leprosy.

THREE GREAT FORCES

How then came a century of modern missions! Three great forces God marshalled to co-operate: the obscure Moravians, the despised Methodists, and a little group of intercessors scattered over Britain and America. There had been a consecrated band in Saxony for about a hundred years, whose hearts' altars had caught fire at Huss's stake, and fed that fire from Spener's pietism, and Zinzendorf's zeal. Their great law was labor for souls, all at it and always at it. God had already made Herrnhut the cradle of missions and had there

revived the apostolic church. Three principles underlay the whole life of the United Brethren: Each disciple is, first, to find his *work* in witness for God; second, his *home* where the widest door opens and the greatest need calls; and third, his *cross* in SELF-DENIAL for Christ. As Count Zinzendorf said: "The whole earth is the Lord's; men's souls are all His; I am debtor to all."

A SYMPHONY OF PRAISE

The Moravians providentially molded John Wesley; and the Holy Club of Lincoln College, Oxford, touched by this influence, took on a distinctively missionary character. Their motto had been, "Holiness to the Lord;" but holiness became wedded to service, and evangelism became the watchword of the Methodists. Just then, in America, and by a strange coincidence, Jonathan Edwards was unconsciously joining John Wesley in preparing the way for modern missions. In 1747, exactly 300 years after the United Brethren organized as followers of Huss, at Lititz in Bohemia, Edwards sent forth his bugle-blast from Northampton, New England, calling God's people to a visible union of prayer for a speedy and world-wide effusion of the Spirit. That bugle-blast found echo in Northampton in old England, and William Carey resolved to organize mission effort—with what results we all know. And, just as the French Revolution let hell loose, a new missionary society in Britain was leading the awakened Church to assault hell at its very gates. Sound it out and let the whole earth hear: *Modern missions came of a symphony of prayer*; and at the most unlikely hour of modern history, God's intercessors in England, Scotland, Saxony, and America repaired the broken altar of supplication, and called down the heavenly fire. That was God's way of preparation.

The "monthly concert" made that prayer-spirit widespread and permanent. The humble Baptists, in widow Wallis's parlor at Kettering, made their covenant of missions; and regi-

ments began to form and take up the line of march, until, before the eighteenth century was a quarter through its course, the whole Church was joining the missionary army. Sydney Smith sneered at the "consecrated cobblers" and tried to rout them from their nest; but the motto of a despised few became the rallying cry of the whole Church of God.

DIVINE CO-OPERATION IN MISSIONS

We turn now to look at the history of the century as a missionary movement. Nothing is more remarkable than the rapid *opening of doors* in every quarter. At the beginning of the century the enterprise of missions seemed, to worldly wise and prudent men, hopeless and visionary. Cannibalism in the Islands of the Sea, fetishism in the Dark Continent, exclusivism in China and Japan, the rigid caste system in India, intolerance in papal lands, and ignorance, idolatry, superstition, depravity, everywhere, in most cases conspiring together, reared before the Church impassable walls, with gates of steel. Most countries shut out Christian missions by organized opposition, so that to attempt to bear the good tidings was to dare death for Christ's sake. The only welcome awaiting God's messengers was that of cannibal ovens, merciless prisons, or martyr graves.

OBSTACLES REMOVED

As the little band advanced, on every hand the walls of opposition fell, and the iron gates opened of their own accord. India, Siam, Burma, China, Japan, Turkey, Africa, Mexico, South America, the Papal States and Korea were successively and successfully entered. *Within five years*, from 1853 to 1858, new facilities were given to the entrance and occupation of seven different countries, together embracing half the world's population! There was also a remarkable subsidence of obstacles, like to the sinking of the land below the sea level to let in its flood, as when the idols of Oahu were abolished just before the first band of missionaries landed at the

Hawaiian shores, or as when war strangely prepared the way just as Robert W. McAll went to Paris to set up his first *salle*.

MISSIONARIES CALLED AND PLACED

At the same time God was raising up, in unprecedented numbers, men and women, so marvelously fitted for the exact work and fields as to show unmistakable foresight and purpose. The biographies of leading missionaries read like chapters where prophecy lights up history. Think of William Carey's inborn adaptation as translator in India, of Livingstone's career as missionary explorer and general in Africa, of Catherine Booth's capacity as mother of the Salvation Army, of Jerry McAuley's preparation for rescue work in New York City, of Alexander Duff's fitness for educational work in India, of Adoniram Judson's schooling for the building of an apostolic church in Burma, of John Williams' unconscious training for evangelist in the South Seas. Then mark the *unity and continuity of labor*—one worker succeeding another at crises unforeseen by man, as when Gordon left for the Sudan on the day when Livingstone's death was first known in London, or Pilkington arrived in Uganda the very year when Mackay's death was to leave a great gap to be filled. Then study the theology of inventions and watch the furnishing of new facilities for the work as it advanced. He who kept back the four greatest inventions of reformation times—the mariner's compass, steam engine, printing press and paper—until His Church put on her new garments, waited to unveil nature's deeper secrets, which should make all men neighbors, until the reformed church was mobilized as an army of conquest!

DIVINE INTERFERENCE

At times this Superintending Providence of God has inspired awe by unmistakably judicial strokes of judgment, as when in Turkey in 1839, in the crisis of missions, Sultan

Mahmud suddenly died, and his edict of expulsion had no executive to carry it out, and his successor Abdul Medjid signalized the succession by the issuing of a new charter of liberty; or, as when in Siam, twelve years later, at another such crisis, God by death dethroned Chaum Klow, the reckless and malicious foe of missions, and set on the vacant throne Maha-Mong-Kut, the one man in the empire taught by a missionary and prepared to be the friend and patron of missions, as also his son and successor, Chulalongkorn!

THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS

These are but parts of His ways. The pages of the century's history are here and there written in blood, but even the blood has a golden luster. Martyrs there have been, like John Williams, and Coleridge Patteson, and James Hannington, Allen Gardiner, and Abraham Lincoln, and David Livingstone, the Gordons of Erromanga and the Gordon of Khartoum, the convert of Lebanon, and the court pages at Uganda; but every one of these deaths has been like seed which falls into the ground to die that it may bring forth fruit. The churches of Polynesia and Melanesia, of Syria and Africa, of India and China, stand rooted in these martyr graves as the oak stands in the grave of the acorn, or the wheat harvest in the farrows of the sown seed. It is part of God's plan that thus the consecrated heralds of the cross shall fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ in their flesh for His body's sake which is the Church.

THE DIVINE BENEDICTION OF MISSIONS

The same Superintending Providence is seen in the *results* of missions. Two brief sentences fitly outline the whole situation as to the *direct* results in the foreign field: First, native churches have been raised up with the three features of a complete church life; self-support, self-government, and self-propagation; and second, the richest fruits of Christianity, both in the individual and in the community, have been found

growing and ripening wherever there has been faithful Gospel effort. Then, as to the *reflex* action of missions on the church at home, two other brief sayings are similarly exhaustive: first, Thomas Chalmers' remark that "foreign missions act on home missions, not by exhaustion, but by fermentation;" and second, Alexander Duff's sage saying, that "the church that is no longer evangelistic, will cease to be evangelical."

The whole hundred years of missions is a historic commentary on these four comprehensive statements. God's Word has never returned to Him void. Like the rain from heaven, it has come down, not to go back until it has made the earth to bring forth and bud, yielding not only bread for the eater, but seed for the sower, providing for salvation of souls and expansion of service. Everywhere God's one everlasting sign has been wrought; instead of the thorn has come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier, the myrtle tree—the soil of society exhibiting a total change in its products, as in the Fiji group, where a thousand churches displace heathen fanes and cannibal ovens, or as among the Karens, where on opposing hills the Schway Mote Tou Pagoda confronts the Kho Thah Byu Memorial Hall, typical of the old and the new. Along the valley of the Euphrates churches have been planted by the score; with native pastors supported by self-denying tithes of their members. Everywhere the seed of the Word of God being sown, it has sprung up in a harvest of renewed souls which in turn have become themselves the good seed of the kingdom, to become also the germs of a new harvest.

CHURCHES AT HOME

On the other hand, God has distinctly shown approval of missionary zeal and enthusiasm in the church at home which has supplied the missionaries. Spiritual prosperity and progress may be gauged so absolutely by the measure of missionary activity, that the spirit of missions is now recognized as the spirit of Christ. The Scripture proverb is proven true: "There

is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty;" and Christ's paradox is illustrated: "The life that is saved is lost, and the life that is lost is saved." Bishop Phillips Brooks compared the church that apologizes for doing nothing to spread the good news on the ground of its poverty and feebleness, to the parricide who, arraigned in court for his father's murder, pleads for mercy on account of his orphanhood! The hundred years have demonstrated that "religion is a commodity of which the more we export the more we have remaining."* The logic of events proves that the surest way to keep the church pure in faith and life, is to push missions with intelligence and holy zeal.

MISSIONARY CHARACTERS

What a distinct seal of God upon mission work is seen in the *high ideals of character* found in the missionaries themselves! If the workman leaves his impress on his work, it is no less true that the work leaves its mark on the workman. Even those who assail missions, applaud the missionaries; they may doubt the policy of sending the best men and women abroad to die by fever or violence, or waste their sweetness on the desert air; but even they do not doubt that the type of character, developed by mission work, is the highest known to humanity. In this field have ripened into beauty and fragrance the fairest flowers and fruits of Christian life; and illustrated, as nowhere else, unselfish devotion to Christ, unswerving loyalty to the Word, and unsparing sacrifice for men. Was it not Theodore Parker who said, that it was no waste to have spent all the money missions had cost, if they gave us one Judson? On the mission field are to be found, if anywhere, the true succession of the apostles, the new accession

*Mr. Crowninshield objected in the Senate of Massachusetts to the incorporation of the A. B. C. F. M. that it was designed to "export religion, whereas there was none to spare from among ourselves." This is Mr. White's reply.

to the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the perpetual procession of the noble army of martyrs.

Surely all this is the standing proof of the Superintending Providence of God. He who gave the marching orders gave at the same time the promise of His perpetual presence on the march; and He has kept His word: "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the age." At every step faith has seen the Invisible Captain of the Lord's host, and, in all victories, behind the sword of Gideon, the sword of the Lord.

GOD IN ALL

In the Acts of the Apostles, within the compass of twenty verses, fifteen times *God* is put boldly forward as the one Actor in all events. Paul and Barnabas rehearsed, in the ears of the church at Antioch and afterward at Jerusalem, not what *they had done* for the Lord, but all that *He had done with them*, and how *He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles*; what miracles and wonders *God had wrought* among the Gentiles *by them*. And, in the same spirit, Peter, before the council, emphasizes how God had made His choice of him as the very mouth whereby the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe; how He had given them the Holy Ghost and put no difference between Jew and Gentile, purifying their hearts by faith; and how He who knew all hearts had thus borne them witness. Then James, in the same strain, refers to the way in which *God had visited* the Gentiles to *take out* of them a people for His name; and concludes by two quotations from the Old Testament which fitly sum up the whole matter: "The Lord *who doeth all* these things." "Known unto God are *all his works* from the beginning of the world." (Acts 14:27 to 15:18.)

The meaning of such repeated phraseology cannot be mistaken. God is thus presented as the one Agent or Actor, even conspicuous apostles, like Paul and Peter, being only His instruments. No equal number of verses in the Word of God

contain such emphatic and repeated lessons on man's insufficiency and nothingness, and God's all-sufficiency and almightiness. God was working upon man through man, choosing man to be His mouthpiece; with His key unlocking shut doors; Himself visiting the nations, taking out a people for His name, turning sinners into saints, purifying hearts and bearing them witness; He alone did all these wondrous things, according to His knowledge and plan of what He would do from the beginning. These are not the acts of the apostles, but the acts of God through the apostles. In the same spirit the praying saint of Bristol names his journal: "The Lord's Dealings with George Müller."

GOD'S RESERVES

There is thus indeed, a Superintending Providence of God in foreign missions; the King is there in imperial conduct, the Lawgiver in authoritative decree; the Judge in reward and penalty; God, the eternal, marshalling the ages with their events; God, the omnipresent, in all places equally controlling; God, the omniscient, wisely adapting all things to His ends. The Father of spirits, discerning the mutual fitness of the worker and his work, raises up men of the times for the times. Himself deathless, His work is immortal though His workmen are mortal, and the building moves on from cornerstone to capstone, while dying builders give place to others. He has opened the doors and made sea and land the highways for international intercourse, and the avenues to international brotherhood. He has multiplied facilities for world-wide evangelization, practically annihilating time and space, and demolishing even the barriers of language. The printing and circulating of the Bible in five hundred tongues, reverses the miracle of Babel and repeats the miracle of Pentecost. Within the past century the God of battles has been calling out His reserves. Three most conspicuous movements of the century were the creation of a new regiment of Medical Missions, the

Woman's Brigade, and the Young People's Crusade. The organization of the Church Army is now so complete that but one thing more is needful; namely, to recognize the Invisible Captain of the Lord's hosts as on the field, to hear His clarion call summoning us to the front, to echo His Word of command; and, in the firm faith of His leadership, pierce the very center of the foe, turn his staggering wings and move forward as one united host in one overwhelming charge.

HISTORIC QUICKENINGS

Perhaps the most conspicuous seal of God upon the mission work of the past century is found in the *spiritual quickenings* which have at some time visited with the power of God *every field of labor* which has been occupied in His name with energy of effort and persistence of prayer. We have called these "quickenings" rather than "revivals," for revival really means a restoration of life-vigor after a season of lapse into indifference and inaction, and properly applies to the *Church*. We treat now of quickenings out of a state of absolute spiritual death; and again we point to these as the most indisputable and unanswerable sanction and seal of God on modern missions.

The following are among the most memorable of the century, arranged for convenience, in the order of time:

- 1815-1816. *Tahiti*, under the labors of Nott, Hayward, etc.
- 1818-1823. *Sierra Leone*, under William A. B. Johnson.
- 1819-1839. *South Seas*, under John Williams.
- 1822-1826. *Hawaiian Islands*, under Bingham, etc.
- 1831-1835. New Zealand, under Samuel Marsden, etc.
- 1832-1839. Burma and Karens, under Judson, etc.
- 1835-1839. *Hilo and Puna*, under Titus Coan.
- 1835-1837. *Madagascar*, under Griffiths, Johns, Baker, etc.
- 1842-1867. Germany, under J. Gerhard Oncken, etc.
- 1844-1850. *Fiji Islands*, under Hung and Calvert, etc.
- 1848-1872. *Aneityum*, under John Geddie, and others.
- 1845-1895. Old Calabar, under J. J. Fuller, etc.
- 1845-1847. Persia, under Fidelia Fiske, etc.
- 1856-1863. *North American Indians*, under William Duncan.

- 1859-1861. English Universities, under D. L. Moody and others.
- 1863-1870. Egypt and Nile Valley, under Drs. Lansing, Hogg, etc.
- 1863-1888. China, generally, especially Hankow, etc.
- 1864-1867. Euphrates District, under Crosby H. Wheeler, etc.
- 1867-1869. *Aniwa*, under John G. Paton, etc.
- 1872-1875. Japan, under J. H. Ballach, Verbeck, etc.
- 1872-1880. Paris, France, under Robert McAll.
- 1877-1878. *Telugus*, under Lyman Jewitt and Dr. Clough.
- 1877-1885. Formosa, under George L. Mackay.
- 1883-1890. *Banza Manteke*, under Henry Richards.
- 1893-1898. *Uganda*, under Pilkington, Roscoe, etc.

Others might be added but these twenty-five instances sufficiently illustrate the fact that, throughout the wide domain of Christian effort, God has signally bestowed blessings. The instances italicized were marked by peculiar swift and sudden outpourings of spiritual power, and it will be seen that these form about half of the entire number, showing that God works in two very diverse ways, in some cases rewarding toil by rapid and sudden visitations of the Spirit, and in quite as many others by slower but equally sure growth and development.

"IN DIVERSE MANNERS"

It is also very noticeable that in almost every one of these marked outpourings some peculiar *principle or law* of God's bestowment of blessing is exhibited and exemplified.

For example, the work at Tahiti followed a long night of toil, and was the crown of peculiar persistence in the face of most stubborn resistance. At Sierra Leone, Johnson found about as hopeless a mass of humanity as ever was rescued from slave-ships, and he himself was an uneducated man, and at first an unordained layman.

John Williams won his victories in the South Seas by the power of a simple proclamation of the Gospel, as an itinerant; and then first came into full view the power of native converts as evangelists. In the Hawaiian group and particularly in Hilo and Puna, it was the oral preaching to the multitudes that brought blessing—Titus Coan holding a three years' camp-meeting.

In New Zealand Marsden had first to lay foundations, patiently and prayerfully, and showed great *faith* in the Gospel. Judson and Boardman, in Burma, found among the Karens a people whom God had mysteriously prepared, though a subject and virtually enslaved race.

Old Calabar was the scene of triumph over deep-rooted customs and age-long superstitions; in Persia, the blessing came upon an educational work attempted single-handed among women and girls. William Duncan in his Metlakahtla reared a model state out of Indians hitherto so fierce and hostile that he dared not assemble hostile tribes in one meeting. The revival in the English universities is especially memorable as the real birth-time of the Cambridge Mission Band and the Student Volunteer Movement which crystallized fully twenty-five years later. In Egypt the transformation was gradual, dependent on teaching as much as preaching, but it has made the Nile Valley one of the marvels of missionary triumph. In China the most marked features were the influence of medical missions and the raising up of a body of unpaid lay-evangelists, who itinerated through their own home territory. On the Euphrates the conspicuous feature was the organization of a large number of self-supporting churches on the tithe system—sometimes starting with only *ten* members—with native pastors. At Aniwa three and a half years saw an utter subversion of the whole social fabric of idolatry. In Japan the signal success was found in the planting of the foundations of a native church, and the remarkable spirit of prayer outpoured on native converts. In Formosa, Mackay won his victories by training a band of young men as evangelists, who with him went out to plant new missions. At Banza Manteki, Richards came to a crisis, and ventured *literally* to obey the New Testament injunctions in the Sermon on the Mount—for example, “give to him that asketh thee.” In Uganda it was the new self-surrender and anointing of the missionaries, and reading of the Scriptures by the unconverted natives, on

which God so singularly smiled. Piikington said in London that he had never known three converts who had not been Bible readers.

LESSONS

Thus, as we take the whole experience of the century together, we find the following emphatic lessons taught us:

1. God has set special honor upon His own Gospel. Where it has been most simply and purely preached the largest fruits have ultimately followed.

2. The translation, publication, and public and private reading of the Scriptures have been particularly owned by the Spirit.

3. Schools, distinctively Christian, and consecrated to the purposes of education of a thoroughly Christian type, have been schools of the Spirit of God.

4. The organization of native churches, on a self-supporting basis with native pastors, and sending out their own members as lay evangelists, has been sealed with blessing.

5. The crisis has always been turned by *prayer*. At the most disheartening periods, when all seemed hopeless, patient waiting on God in faith has brought sudden and abundant floods of blessing.

6. The more complete self-surrender of missionaries themselves, and their new equipment by the Holy Spirit, has often been the opening of a new era to the native church and the whole work.

These are lessons worth learning. The secrets of success are no different from what they were in apostolic days.

"THE FINGER OF GOD"

Our God is the same God, and His methods do not essentially change. He has commanded us to go into all the world and preach the good tidings to the whole creation; and the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," is inseparable from

obedience. In connection with this Gospel message He has given us certain prominent aids, which are by no means to be reckoned as belonging to a realm of minor importance, and among them Christian teaching, Bible searching, fervent prayer, and Holy Spirit power outrank all other conditions of successful service. The survey of the century is like reading new chapters in the Acts; no true believer can attempt it carefully without finding a new Book of God in the history of this hundred years. Any man or woman who will take the score or more of marked quickenings we have outlined, and give a solid month to their consecutive study, will find all doubts dissipated that the living God has been at work, and that no field, however hard and stony and hopelessly barren, can ultimately resist culture on New Testament lines. In nothing do we need a new and clarified vision more than in the clear perception and conviction that the days of the supernatural are not past. Here is the school where these lessons are taught. Ten centuries of merely natural forces at work would never have wrought what ten years have accomplished, even when every human condition forbade success. A feeble band of missionaries in the midst of a vast host of the heathen have been compelled to master a foreign tongue, and often reduce it for the first time to written form, translate the Word of God, set up schools, win converts, and train them into consistent members and competent evangelists; remove mountains of ancestral superstitions and uproot sycamine trees of pagan customs; establish medical missions, Christian colleges, create Christian literature, model society on a new basis; and they have done all this within the lifetime of a generation, and sometimes within a decade of years! Even Pharaoh's magicians would have been compelled to confess, "This is the finger of God!"

CHAPTER II

IS THERE A GOD?

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Whether or not there is a supreme personal intelligence, infinite and eternal, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, the Creator, upholder and ruler of the universe, immanent in and yet transcending all things, gracious and merciful, the Father and Redeemer of mankind, is surely the profoundest problem that can agitate the human mind. Lying as it does at the foundation of all man's religious beliefs—as to responsibility and duty, sin and salvation, immortality and future blessedness, as to the possibility of a revelation, of an incarnation, of a resurrection, as to the value of prayer, the credibility of miracle, the reality of providence,—with the reply given to it are bound up not alone the temporal and eternal happiness of the individual, but also the welfare and progress of the race. Nevertheless, to it have been returned the most varied responses.

The Atheist, for example, asserts that there is no God. The Agnostic professes that he cannot tell whether there is a God or not. The Materialist boasts that he does not need a God, that he can run the universe without one. The (Bible) Fool wishes there was no God. The Christian answers that he cannot do without a God.

I. THE ANSWER OF THE ATHEIST

“THERE IS NO GOD”

In these days it will hardly do to pass by this bold and confident negation by simply saying that the theoretical atheist is an altogether exceptional specimen of humanity, and that

his audacious utterance is as much the outcome of ignorance as of impiety. When one meets in the "Hibbert Journal" from the pen of its editor such a statement as this: "Society abounds with earnest and educated persons who have lost faith in a living personal God, and see their fellows and foresee themselves passing out of life entirely without hope," and when Blatchford in the English "Clarion" writes: "There is no Heavenly Father watching tenderly over us, His creatures, He is the baseless shadow of a wistful dream," it becomes apparent that theoretical atheism is not extinct, even in cultured circles, and that some observations with regard to it may still be needful. Let these observations be the following:

1. *Belief that there is no God does not amount to a demonstration that no God is.* Neither, it is true, does belief that God is prove the truth of the proposition except to the individual in whose heart that belief has been awakened by the Divine Spirit. To another than him it is destitute of weight as an argument in support of the theistic position. At the same time it is of importance, while conceding this, to emphasize the fact that disbelief in the existence of a Divine Being is not equivalent to a demonstration that there is no God.

2. *Such a demonstration is from the nature of the case impossible.* Here again it may be true as Kant contends that reason cannot demonstrate (that is, by logic) the existence of God; but it is equally true, as the same philosopher admits, that reason can just as little disprove the existence of God. It was well observed by the late Prof. Calderwood of the Edinburgh University that "the divine existence is a truth so plain that it needs no proof, as it is a truth so high that it admits of none." But the situation is altered when it comes to a positive denial of that existence. The idea of God once formed in the mind, whether as an intuition or as a deduction, cannot be laid aside without convincing evidence that it is delusive and unreal. And such evidence cannot be produced. As Dr. Chalmers long ago observed, before one can positively assert

that there is no God, he must arrogate to himself the wisdom and ubiquity of God. He must explore the entire circuit of the universe to be sure that no God is there. He must have interrogated all the generations of mankind and all the hierarchies of heaven to be certain they had never heard of a God.

In short, as Chalmers puts it, "For man not to know God, he has only to sink beneath the level of our common nature. But to deny God he must be God himself."

3. *Denial of the divine existence is not warranted by inability to discern traces of God's presence in the universe.* Prof. Huxley, who once described himself in a letter to Charles Kingsley as "exactly what the Christian world called, and, so far as he could judge, was justified in calling him, an atheist and infidel," appeared to think it was. "I cannot see," he wrote, "one shadow or tittle of evidence that the Great Unknown underlying the phenomena of the universe stands to us in the relation of a Father, loves us and cares for us as Christianity asserts." Blatchford also with equal emphasis affirms: "I cannot believe that God is a personal God who interferes in human affairs. I cannot see in science, or in experience, or in history, any signs of such a God or of such intervention." Neither of these writers, however, it may be presumed, would on reflection advance their incapacity to perceive the footprints or hear the voices of the Creator as proof that no Creator existed, any more than a blind man would maintain there was no sun because he could not see it, or a deaf man would contend there was no sound because he never heard it. The incapacity of Huxley and Blatchford to either see or hear God may, and no doubt does, serve as an explanation of their atheistical creed, but assuredly it is no justification of the same, since a profounder reasoner than either has said: "The invisible things of God since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity; so that they [who believe not] are without excuse."

4. *The majority of mankind, not in Christian countries only, but also in heathen lands, from the beginning of the world onward, have believed in the existence of a Supreme Being.* They may frequently, as Paul says, have "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things;" but deeply seated in their natures, debased though these were by sin, lay the conception of a Superhuman Power to whom they owed allegiance and whose favor was indispensable to their happiness. It was a saying of Plutarch that in his day a man might travel the world over without finding a city without temples and gods; in our day isolated cases have been cited of tribes—the Andaman Islanders by Sir John Lubbock, and the Fuegians, by Admiral Fitzroy—who have exhibited no signs that they possessed a knowledge either of God or of religion. But it is at least open to question whether the investigators on whose testimony such instances are advanced did not fail to discover traces of what they sought either through want of familiarity with the language of the natives, or through starting with the presupposition that the religious conceptions of the natives must be equally exalted with their own. In any case, on the principle that exceptions prove the rule, it may be set down as incontrovertible that the vast majority of mankind have possessed some idea of a Supreme Being; so that if the truth or falsehood of the proposition, "There is no God," is to be determined by the counting of votes, the question is settled in the negative, that is, against the atheist's creed.

II. THE CONFESSION OF THE AGNOSTIC

"I CANNOT TELL WHETHER THERE IS A GOD OR NOT"

Without dogmatically affirming that there is no God, the Agnostic practically insinuates that whether there is a God or not, nobody can tell and it does not much matter—that man with his loftiest powers of thought and reason and with his

best appliances of research, cannot come to speech with God or obtain reliable information concerning Him, can only build up an imaginary picture, like an exaggerated or overgrown man, and call that God—in other words, can only make a God after his own image and in his own likeness without being sure whether any corresponding reality stands behind it, or even if there is, whether that reality can be said to come up to the measure of a Divine Being or be entitled to be designated God. The agnostic does not deny that behind the phenomena of the universe there may be a Power, but whether there is or not, and if there is, whether that Power is a Force or a Person, are among the things unknown and unknowable, so that practically, God being outside and beyond the sphere of man's knowledge, it can never be of consequence whether there be a God or not—it can never be more than a subject of curious speculation, like that which engages the leisure time of some astronomers, whether there be inhabitants in the planet Mars or not.

As thus expounded, the creed of the agnostic is open to serious objections.

1. *It entirely ignores the spiritual factor in man's nature*,—either denying the soul's existence altogether, or viewing it as merely a function of the body; or, if regarding it as a separate entity distinct from the body, and using its faculties to apprehend and reason about external objects, yet denying its ability to discern spiritual realities. On either alternative, it is contradicted by both Scripture and experience. From Genesis to Revelation the Bible proceeds upon the assumption that man is more than "six feet of clay," "curiously carved and wondrously articulated," that "there is a spirit in man," and that this spirit has power not only to apprehend things unseen but to come into touch with God and to be touched by Him, or, in Scripture phrase, to see and know God and to be seen and known by Him. Nor can it be denied that man is conscious of being more than animated matter, and of having power to apprehend more than comes within the range of his senses, for

he can and does entertain ideas and cherish feelings that have at least no direct connection with the senses, and can originate thoughts, emotions and volitions that have not been excited by external objects. And as to knowing God, Christian experience attests the truth of Scripture when it says that this knowledge is no figure of speech or illusion of the mind, but a sober reality. It is as certain as language can make it that Abraham and Jacob, Moses and Joshua, Samuel and David, Isaiah and Jeremiah, had no doubt whatever that they knew God and were known of Him; and multitudes of Christians exist to-day whom it would not be easy to convince that they could not and did not know God, although not through the medium of the senses or even of the pure reason.

2. *It takes for granted that things cannot be adequately known unless they are fully known.* This proposition, however, cannot be sustained in either Science or Philosophy, in ordinary life or in religious experience. Science knows there are such things as life (vegetable and animal), and force (electricity and magnetism for example), but confesses its ignorance of what life and force are as to their essence—all that is understood about them being their properties and effects. Philosophy can expound the laws of thought, but is baffled to unriddle the secret of thought itself, how it is excited in the soul by nerve-movements caused by impressions from without, and how it can express itself by originating counter movements in the body. In ordinary life human beings know each other adequately for all practical purposes while aware that in each there are depths which the other cannot fathom, each being shut off from the other by what Prof. Dods calls “the limitations of personality.” Nor is the case different in religious experience. The Christian, like Paul, may have no difficulty in saying, “Christ liveth in me,” but he cannot explain to himself or others, how. Hence the inference must be rejected that because the finite mind cannot fully comprehend the infinite, therefore it cannot know the

infinite at all, and must remain forever uncertain whether there is a God or not. Scripture, it should be noted, does not say that any finite mind can fully find out God; but it does say that men may know God from the things which He has made, and more especially from the Image of Himself which has been furnished in Jesus Christ, so that if they fail to know Him, they are without excuse.

3. *It virtually undermines the foundations of morality.* For if one cannot tell whether there is a God or not, how can one be sure that there is any such thing as morality? The distinctions between right and wrong which one makes in the regulation of his conduct may be altogether baseless. It is true a struggle may be made to keep them up out of a prudential regard for future safety, out of a desire to be on the winning side in case there should be a God. But it is doubtful if the imperative "ought" would long resound within one's soul, were the conclusion once reached that no one could tell whether behind the phenomena of nature or of consciousness there was a God or not. Morality no more than religion can rest on uncertainties.

III. THE BOAST OF THE MATERIALIST

"I DO NOT NEED A GOD, I CAN RUN THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT ONE"

Only grant him to begin with an ocean of atoms and a force to set them in motion and he will forthwith explain the mystery of creation. If we have what he calls a scientific imagination, he will let us see the whole process,—the molecules or atoms circling and whirling, dancing and skipping, combining and dividing, advancing and retiring, selecting partners and forming groups, closing in their ranks and opening them out again, building up space-filling masses, growing hotter and hotter as they wheel through space, whirling swifter and swifter, till through sheer velocity they swell and burst, after which they break up into fragments and cool down into a complete planetary system.

Inviting us to light upon this globe, the materialist will show us how through long centuries, mounting up to millions of years, the various rocks which form the earth's crust were deposited. Nay, if we will dive with him to the bottom of the ocean he will point out the first speck of dead matter that sprang into life, protoplasm, though he cannot tell when or how. Having startled us with this, he will lead us up the Great Staircase of Nature with its 26 or 27 steps, and tell us how on this step the vegetable grew into an animal, and how after many more steps the animal became a man, and thus the whole evolutionary drama will be unrolled.

Concerning this theory of the universe, however, it is pertinent to make these remarks:

1. Taken at its full value, with unquestioning admission of the alleged scientific facts on which it is based, *it is at best only an inference or working hypothesis, which may or may not be true and which certainly cannot claim to be beyond dispute.*

2. So far from securing universal acceptance, *it has been repudiated by scientists of the highest repute.* "The Kant-Laplace theory of the origin of the solar system by the whirling masses of nebulous matter, till rings flew off and became the worlds we see," says a German writer, "can no more be defended by any scientist" (*Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1905, p. 957). The attempt to explain in this way the origin of the universe, says Merz, can be described as "belonging to the romance of science" (*European Thought in the 19th Cent.*, p. 285). Indeed Laplace himself put it forward "with great reserve, and only as a likely suggestion" (*ibid.*, p. 285). As regards the derivation of man from the lower animals, it is enough to remember that the late Prof. Virchow maintained that "we cannot designate it as a revelation of science, that man descends from the ape or from any other animal" (*Nature*, Dec. 8, 1877); that Prof. Paulsen, speaking of Haeckel, says "he belongs already to a dead generation," and calls his theory

of materialistic evolution "an example of incredible frivolity in the treatment of serious problems" (see Princeton Review, Oct., 1906, p. 443); that Prof. Von E. Pfenningsdorf declares "the materialistic explanation of the world to be untenable" (see Theologische Rundschau, 1905, p. 85); that Fleischman in his book, "Die Deszendenz Theorie," denies evolution altogether; that Dr. Rudolph Otto admits that "popular Darwinism (Darwinisms Vulgaris)," by which he means "that man is really descended from monkeys," is "theoretically worthless" (Naturalism and Religion, p. 94); and that Prof. Pettigrew of St. Andrew's University writes: "There is, it appears to me, no proof that man is directly descended from the ape, and indirectly from the mollusc or monad" (Design in Nature, Vol. III, p. 1324).

3. *Conceding all that evolutionists demand*, that from matter and force the present cosmos has been developed, *the question remains, whether this excludes or renders unnecessary the intervention of God as the prime mover in the process.* If it does, one would like to know whence matter and force came. For the atoms or molecules, formerly supposed to be ultimates and indivisible, have now been proved by science to be manufactured and capable of being analyzed into myriads of electrons; and it is hardly supposable that they manufactured themselves. Moreover, one would like to know how these atoms or electrons came to attract and repel one another and form combinations, if there was no original cause behind them and no aim before them? If even matter be construed as a form of energy, or force, the difficulty is not removed, since force in its last analysis is the output of will and will implies intelligence or conscious personality.

From this conclusion escape is impossible, except by assuming that matter and force existed from eternity; in which case they must have contained in themselves the germs of life and intelligence—in other words must themselves have been God—in *posse*, if not in *esse*, in potentiality if not in reality.

But against this pantheistical assumption must ever lie the difficulty of explaining how or why the God that was latent in matter or force was so long in arriving at consciousness in man, and how before man appeared, the latent God being unconscious could have directed the evolutionary process which fashioned the cosmos. Till these inquiries are satisfactorily answered, it will not be possible to accept the materialistic solution of the universe.

IV. THE DESIRE OF THE (BIBLE) FOOL

"I WISH THERE WAS NO GOD"

Only a few words need be given to this rejoinder, as the fool does not say in his intellect, but only in his heart, there is no God. In his case the wish is father to the thought. Secretly persuaded in his mind that there is a God, he would much rather there had been none. It would suit him better. But the fact that he cannot advance to a categorical denial of the Divine Existence is an indirect witness to the innate conviction which the human heart possesses, that there is a God in whom man lives and moves and has his being.

V. THE DECLARATION OF THE CHRISTIAN

"I CANNOT DO WITHOUT A GOD, WITHOUT A GOD I CAN NEITHER
ACCOUNT FOR THE UNIVERSE AROUND ME, NOR EXPLAIN
JESUS CHRIST ABOVE ME, NOR UNDERSTAND THE
SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES WITHIN ME"

1. *Without a God the material universe around the Christian is and remains a perplexing enigma.*

When he surveys that portion of the universe which lies open to his gaze, he sees marks of wisdom, power and goodness that irresistibly suggest the idea of a God. When he looks upon the stellar firmament with its innumerable orbs, and considers their disposition and order, their balancing and circling, he instinctively argues that these shining suns and

systems must have been created, arranged and upheld by a Divine Mind. When, restricting his attention to the earth on which he stands, he notes the indications of design or of adaptation of means to end which are everywhere visible, as witnessed, for example, in the constancy of nature's laws and forces, in the endless variety of nature's forms, inanimate and animate, as well as in their wonderful gradation not only in their kinds but also in the times of their appearing, and in the marvelous adjustment of organs to environment, he feels constrained to reason that these things are not the result of chance which is blind or the spontaneous output of matter, which in itself, so far as known to him, is powerless, lifeless and unintelligent, but can only be the handiwork of a Creative Mind. When further he reflects that in the whole round of human experience, effects have never been known to be produced without causes; that designs have never been known to be conceived or worked out without designers and artificers; that dead matter has never been known to spring into life either spontaneously or by the application of means; that one kind of life has never been known to transmute itself spontaneously or to be transmuted artificially into another, neither a vegetable into an animal, nor an animal into a man; and when lastly, accepting the guidance of science, he perceives that in the upward ascent or evolution of nature dead matter was, after an interval, perhaps of millions of years, followed by vegetable life, and this again by animal existence, and this by man precisely as Scripture asserts, he once more feels himself shut up to the conclusion that the whole cosmos must be the production of mind, even of a Supreme Intelligence infinitely powerful, wise and good. Like the Hebrew psalmist he feels impelled to say, "O Lord! how manifold are Thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all!"

Should the philosopher interject, that this argument does not necessarily require an Infinite Intelligence but only an artificer capable of constructing such a universe as the present,

the answer is that if such an artificer existed he himself would require to be accounted for, since beings that are finite must have begun to be, and therefore must have been caused.

Accordingly this artificer must have been preceded by another greater than himself, and that by another still greater, and so on travelling backwards forever. Hence it was argued by Kant that pure reason could not demonstrate the existence of God, but only of a competent demiurge or world-builder. But this reasoning is fallacious. The human mind cannot rest in an endless succession of effects without a First Cause, like a chain depending from nothing. Kant himself seemed to recognize the unsatisfactory character of his logic, since, after casting out God from the universe as Creator, he sought to bring Him in again as Supreme Moral Governor.

But if man's moral nature cannot be explained without a Supreme Moral Lawgiver, on what principle can it be reasoned that man's intellectual nature demands less than a Supreme Intelligence?

2. Without a God the Christian cannot explain to himself the Person of Jesus.

Leaving out of view what the Gospels report about His virgin birth (though we do not regard the narratives as unhistorical or the fact recorded as incredible), and fixing attention solely on the four records, the Christian discerns a personality that cannot be accounted for on ordinary principles. It is not merely that Jesus performed works such as none other man did, and spoke words such as never fell from mortal lips; it is that in addition His life was one of incomparable goodness—of unwearied philanthropy, self-sacrificing love, lowly humility, patient meekness and spotless purity—such as never before had been witnessed on earth, and never since has been exhibited by any of His followers. It is that Jesus, being such a personality as described by those who beheld His glory to be that of an only-begotten from a Father, full of grace and truth, put forth such pretensions and claims

as were wholly unfitting in the lips of a mere man, and much more of a sinful man, declaring Himself to be the Light of the World and the Bread of Life: giving out that He had power to forgive sins and to raise the dead; that He had pre-existed before He came to earth and would return to that pre-existent state when His work was done, which work was to die for men's sins; that He would rise from the dead and ascend up into heaven, both of which He actually did; and asserting that He was the Son of God, the equal of the Father and the future Judge of mankind. The Christian studying this picture perceives that, while to it belong the lineaments of a man, it also wears the likeness of a God, and he reasons that if that picture was drawn from the life (and how otherwise could it have been drawn?) then a God must once have walked this earth in the person of Jesus. For the Christian no other conclusion is possible. Certainly not that of the New Theology, which makes of Jesus a sinful man, distinguishing Him from Christ, the so-called ideal figure of the creeds, and calling Him divine only in the sense that other men are divine though in a lesser degree than He. But even the New Theology cannot escape from the implication of its own creed. For if Jesus was the divinest man that ever lived on earth, then naturally His Word should carry more weight than that of any other, and He taught emphatically, not only that there was a personal God whose Son He was, but that men should pray: "Our Father which art in Heaven."

3. *Without a God the Christian cannot understand the facts of his own consciousness.*

Take first the idea of God of which he finds himself possessed on arriving at the age of intelligence and responsibility. How it comes to pass that this great idea should arise within him if no such being as God exists, is something he cannot understand. To say that he has simply inherited it from his parents or absorbed it from his contemporaries is not to solve the problem, but only to put it back from generation to gen-

eration. The question remains, How did this idea first originate in the soul? To answer that it gradually grew up out of totemism and animism as practiced by the low-grade races who, impelled by superstitious fears, conceived material objects to be inhabited by ghosts or spirits, is equally an evasion of the problem. Because again the question arises, How did these low-grade races arrive at the conception of spirits as distinguished from bodies or material objects in general? Should it be responded that veneration for deceased ancestors begat the conception of a God, one must further demand by what process of reasoning they were conducted from the conception of as many gods as there were deceased ancestors to that of one Supreme Deity or Lord of all. The only satisfactory explanation of the latent consciousness of God which man in all ages and lands has shown himself to be possessed of is, that it is one of the soul's intuitions, a part of the intellectual and moral furniture with which it comes into the world; that at first this idea or intuition lies within the soul as a seed corn which gradually opens out as the soul rises into full possession of its powers and is appealed to by external nature; that had sin not entered into the world this idea or intuition would have everywhere expanded into full bloom, filling the soul with a clear and radiant conception of the Divine Being, in whose image it has been made; but that now in consequence of the blighting influence of sin this idea or intuition has been everywhere more or less dimmed and weakened and in heathen nations corrupted and debased.

Then rising to the distinctly religious experience of conversion, the Christian encounters a whole series or group of phenomena which to him are inexplicable, if there is no God. Conscious of a change partly intellectual but mainly moral and spiritual, a change so complete as to amount to an inward revolution, what Scripture calls a new birth or a new creation, he cannot trace it to education or to environment, to philosophical reflection or to prudential considerations.

The only reasonable account he can furnish of it is that he has been laid hold of by an unseen but Superhuman Power, so that he feels constrained to say like Paul: "By the grace of God I am what I am." And not only so, but as the result of this inward change upon his nature, he realizes that he stands in a new relation to that Supreme Power which has quickened and renewed him, that he can and does enter into personal communion with Him through Jesus Christ, addressing to Him prayers and receiving from Him benefits and blessings in answer to those prayers.

These experiences of which the Christian is conscious may be characterized by the non-Christian as illusions, but to the Christian they are realities; and being realities they make it simply impossible for him to believe there is no God. Rather they inspire him with confidence that God is, and is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and that of Him and through Him and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER III

SIN AND JUDGMENT TO COME

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The Book of Judges records that in evil days when civil war was raging in Israel, the tribe of Benjamin boasted of having 700 men who "could sling stones at a hair breadth and not miss." Nearly two hundred times the Hebrew word *chatha*, here translated "miss," is rendered "sin" in our English Bible; and this striking fact may teach us that while "all unrighteousness is sin," the root-thought of sin is far deeper. Man is a sinner because, like a clock that does not tell the time, he fails to fulfill the purpose of his being. And that purpose is (as the Westminster divines admirably state it), "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." Our Maker intended that "we should be to the praise of His glory." But we utterly fail of this; we "come short of the glory of God." Man is a sinner not merely because of what he does, but by reason of what he *is*.

MAN A FAILURE

That man is a failure is denied by none save the sort of people who say in their heart, "There is no God." For, are we not conscious of baffled aspirations, and unsatisfied longings after the infinite? Some there are, indeed, we are told, who have no such aspirations. There are seeming exceptions, no doubt—Mr. A. J. Balfour instances "street arabs and advanced thinkers"—but such exceptions can be explained. And these aspirations and longings—these cravings of our higher being—are quite distinct from the groan of the lower creation. How, then, can we account for them? The atheistical evolu-

tion which has superseded Darwinism can tell us nothing here. They are a part of the mass of proof that man is by nature a religious being; and that indisputable fact points to the further fact that he is God's creature. People who are endowed with an abnormal capacity for "simple faith" may possibly attribute the intellectual and aesthetical phenomena of man's being to the great "primordial germ," a germ which was not created at all, but (according to the philosophy of one of Mark Twain's amusing stories), "only just happened." But most of us are so dull-witted that we cannot rise to belief in an effect without an adequate cause; and if we accepted the almighty germ hypothesis we should regard it as a more amazing display of creative power than the "Mosaic cosmogony" described.

WHY A FAILURE?

But all this, which is so clear to every free and fearless thinker, gives rise to a difficulty of the first magnitude. If man be a failure, how can he be a creature of a God who is infinite in wisdom and goodness and power? He is like a bird with a broken wing, and God does not make birds with broken wings. If a bird cannot fly, the merest baby concludes that something must have happened to it. And by an equally simple process of reasoning we conclude that some evil has happened to our race. And here the Eden Fall affords an adequate explanation of the strange anomalies of our being, and no other explanation of them is forthcoming. Certain it is, then, that man is God's creature, and no less certain is it that he is a fallen creature. Even if Scripture were silent here, the patent facts would lead us to infer that some disaster such as that which Genesis records must have befallen the human race.

MAN WITHOUT EXCUSE

But, while this avails to solve one difficulty, it suggests another. The dogma of the moral depravity of man, and irremediable, cannot be reconciled with divine justice in pun-

ishing sin. If by the law of his fallen nature man were incapable of doing right, it would be clearly inequitable to punish him for doing wrong. If the Fall had made him crooked-backed, to punish him for not standing upright, would be worthy of an unscrupulous and cruel tyrant. But we must distinguish between theological dogma and divine truth. That man is without excuse is the clear testimony of Holy Writ. This, moreover, is asserted emphatically of the heathen; and its truth is fully established by the fact that even heathendom has produced some clean, upright lives. Such cases, no doubt, are few and far between; but that in no way affects the principle of the argument; for, what some have done all might do. True it is that in the antediluvian age the entire race was sunk in vice; and such was also the condition of the Canaanites in later times. But the divine judgments that fell on them are proof that their condition was not solely an inevitable consequence of the Fall. For, in that case the judgments would have been a display, not of divine justice, but of ruthless vengeance.

DEPRAVITY IN RELIGIOUS NATURE

And, further, if this dogma were true, all unregenerate men would be equally degraded, whereas, in fact, the unconverted religionist can maintain as high a standard of morality as the spiritual Christian. In this respect the life of Saul the Pharisee was as perfect as that of Paul the Apostle of the Lord. His own testimony to this is unequivocal. (Acts 26:4, 5; Phil. 3:4-6.) No less so is his confession that, notwithstanding his life of blameless morality, he was a persecuting blasphemer and the chief of sinners. (1 Tim. 1:13.)

The solution of this seeming enigma is to be found in the fact so plainly declared in the Scripture, that it is not in the moral, but in the religious or the spiritual sphere, that man is *hopelessly* depraved and lost. Hence the terrible word—as true of those who stand on a pinnacle of high morality as of

those who wallow in filthy sin—"they that are in the flesh cannot please God." "The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib." But, as for us, we have gone astray like lost sheep. The natural man does not know his God.

MAN A SINNER IN CHARACTER

While then sin has many aspects, man is a sinner, I repeat, primarily and essentially, not because of what he does but because of what he is. And this brings into prominence the obvious truth that sin is to be judged from the divine, and not from the human, standpoint. It relates to God's requirements and not to man's estimate of himself. And this applies to all the many aspects in which sin may be regarded. "It may be contemplated as the missing of a mark or aim; it is then *ἁμαρτία* or *ἁμάρτημα*: the overpassing or transgressing of a line; it is then *παράβασις*: the disobedience to a voice; in which case it is *παρακοή*: the falling where one should have stood upright; this will be *παράπτωμα*: ignorance of what one ought to have known; this will be *ἀγνόημα*: diminishing of that which should have been rendered in full measure which is *ἡτέτημα*: non-observance of a law, which is *ἀνομία* or *παρانونμία*: a discord, and then it is *πλημμέλεια* and in other ways almost out of number."

This well known passage from Archbishop Trench's "Synonyms" must not be taken as a theological statement of doctrine. As Dr. Trench notices on a later page, the word *ἁμαρτία* has a far wider scope than "the missing of a mark or aim." It is used in the New Testament as the generic term for sin. And *ἀνομία* has a far deeper significance than the "non-observance of a law." 'H *ἁμαρτία* ἐστίν ἡ *ἀνομία*, we read in 1 John 3:4; and "sin is lawlessness" is the revisers' admirable rendering of the apostle's words. What anarchy is in another sphere, *anomia* is in this—not mere non-observance of a law, but a revolt against, and defiance of law. "Original sin" may sometimes find expression in "I cannot;" but "I will

not" is at the back of all actual sin; its root principle is the assertion of a will that is not subject to the will of God.

THE CARNAL MIND

Spiritual truths are spiritually discerned; but when the Apostle Paul declares that "the carnal mind," that is, the unenlightened mind of the natural man, "is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God" (Rom. 8:7), he is stating what is a fact in the experience of all thoughtful men. It is not that men by nature prefer evil to good; *that* betokens a condition due to vicious practices. "Given up to a reprobate mind" is the apostle's description of those who are thus depraved by the indulgence of "shameful passions." The subject is a delicate and unsavory one; but all who have experience of criminals can testify that the practice of unnatural vices destroys all power of appreciating the natural virtues. As the first chapter of Romans tells us, the slaves of such vices sink to the degradations, not only of "doing such things," but of "taking pleasure in them that do them" (Rom. 1:24-32). All power of recovery is gone—there is nothing in them to which appeal can be made.*

But this is abnormal. Notwithstanding indulgence in "natural" vice, there is in man a latent sense of self-respect which may be invoked. Even a great criminal is not insensible to such an appeal. For, although his powers of self-control may be almost paralyzed, he does not call evil good, but acknowledges it to be evil. And thus to borrow the apostle's words, he "consents to the law that it is good." But, if he does so, it is because he recognizes it to be the law of his own better nature. He is thinking of what is due to himself. Speak to him of what is due to God, and the latent enmity of the "carnal mind" is at once aroused. In the case of one who has had

*I cannot refrain from saying that if I can intelligently "justify the ways of God" in destroying the cities of the plain, and decreeing the extermination of the Canaanites, I owe it to knowledge gained in police work in London, for *unnatural* vice seems to be hereditary.

a religious training, the manifestations of that enmity may be modified or restrained; but he is conscious of it none the less.

Thoughtful men of the world, I repeat, do not share the doubts which some theologians entertain as to the truth of Scriptural teaching on this subject. For, every waking hour brings proof "that the relationship between man and his Maker has become obscured, and that even when he knows the will of God there is something in his nature which prompts him to rebel against it." Such a state of things, moreover, is obviously abnormal, and if the divine account of it be rejected, it must remain a mystery unsolved and unsoluble. The Eden Fall explains it, and no other explanation can be offered.

THE ROOT OF SIN

It might be argued that an unpremeditated sin—a sin in which mind and will have no part—is a contradiction in terms. But this we need not discuss, for it is enough for the present purpose to notice the obvious fact that with unfallen beings such a sin would be impossible. As the Epistle of James declares, every sin is the outcome of an evil desire. And eating the forbidden fruit was the result of a desire excited by yielding to the tempter's wiles. When a woman harbors the thought of breaking her marriage vow she ceases to be pure; and once our parents lent a willing ear to Satan's gospel, "Ye shall not surely die," "Ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil," their fall was an accomplished fact. The overt act of disobedience, which followed as of course, was but the outward manifestation of it. And, as their ruin was accomplished, not by the corruption of their morals, but by the undermining of their faith in God, it is not, I repeat, in the moral, but in the spiritual sphere, that the ruin is complete and hopeless.

RECONCILIATION THE GREAT NEED

Therefore also is it that while "patient continuance in well doing" is within the human capacity, Rom. 2:6-11 applies to

all whether with or without a divine revelation; but of course the test and standard would be different with the Jew and the heathen, and the denial of this not only supplies an adequate apology for a life of sin, but impugns the justice of the divine judgment which awaits it—no amount of success, no measure of attainment, in this sphere can avail to put us right with God. If my house be in darkness owing to the electric current having been cut off, no amount of care bestowed upon my plant and fittings will restore the light. My first need is to have the current renewed. And so here; man by nature is “alienated from the life of God,” and his first need is to be reconciled to God. And apart from redemption reconciliation is impossible.

NEO-CHRISTIANISM

A discussion of the sin question apart from God's remedy for sin would present the truth in a perspective so wholly false as to suggest positive error. But before passing on to speak of the remedy something more needs to be said about the disease. For the loose thoughts so prevalent today respecting the atonement are largely due to an utterly inadequate appreciation of sin; and this again depends on ignorance of God. Sin in every respect of it has, of course, a relation to a savage; and as man is God's creature the standard is, again of course, divine perfection. But the God of the neo-Christianism of the day—we must not call it Christianity—is a weak and gentle human “Jesus” who has supplanted the God of both nature and revelation.

The element of the folly in religious heresies affords material for an interesting psychological study. If the Gospels be not authentic, then, so far as the teaching of Christ is concerned, intelligent agnosticism will be the attitude of every one who is not a superstitious religionist. But if the records of the ministry be trustworthy, it is certain, first, that the Hebrew Scriptures were the foundation of the Lord's teach-

ing; and secondly, that His warnings of divine judgment upon sin were more terrible than even the thunders of Sinai. During all the age in which the echoes of those thunders mingled with the worship of His people, the prophetic spirit could discern the advent of a future day of full redemption. And it was in the calm and sunshine of the dawning of that long promised day that He spoke of a doom more terrible than that which engulfed the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah, for all who saw His works and heard His words, and yet repented not.

THE PERFECT STANDARD

And here we may get hold of a great principle which will help us to reconcile seemingly conflicting statements of Scripture, and to silence some of the cavils of unbelief. The thoughtful will recognise that in divine judgment the standard must be perfection. And when thus tested, both the proud religionist Christendom "exalted to heaven" like Capernaum by outward privilege and blessing, and the typical savage of a degraded heathendom, must stand together. If God accepted a lower standard than perfect righteousness He would declare Himself unrighteous; and the great problem of redemption is not how He can be just in condemning, but how He can be just in forgiving. In a criminal court "guilty or not guilty" is the first question to be dealt with in every case, and this levels all distinctions; and so it is here; all men "come short," and therefore "all the world" is brought in "guilty before God." But after verdict comes the sentence and at this stage the question of degrees of guilt demands consideration. And at "the Great Assize" that question will be decided with perfect equity. For some there will be many stripes, for others there will be few. In the vision given us of that awful scene we read that "the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, *according to their works*" (Rev. 20:12).

And this will be the scope and purpose of the judgment of the Great Day. The transcendent question of the ultimate fate of men must be settled before the advent of that day; for the resurrection will declare it and the resurrection precedes the judgment. For there is a "resurrection unto life," and a "resurrection unto judgment" (John 5:29). While the redeemed, we are expressly told, will be "raised in glory"—and "we know that we shall be like Him," with bodies "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21)—the lost will be raised in bodies; but here I pause, for Scripture is almost silent on this subject, and conjecture is unsafe. It may be that just as criminals leave a prison in garb like that they wore on entering it, so the doomed may reappear in bodies akin to those that were the instruments of their vices and sins on earth. If the saved are to be raised in glory and honor and incorruption, (1 Cor. 15:42-44), may not the lost be recalled to bodily life in corruption, dishonor and shame?

JUDGMENT TO COME

But though the supreme issue of the destiny of men does not await that awful inquest, "judgment to come" is a reality for all. For it is of the people of God that the Word declares "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," and "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10, 12). And that judgment will bring reward to some and loss to others. Incalculable harm results from that sort of teaching which dins into the ears of the unconverted that they have no power to live a pure and decent life, and which deludes the Christian into thinking that at death he will forfeit his personality by losing all knowledge of the past, and that heaven is a fool's paradise where waters of Lethe will wipe out our memories of earth. "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).

But this judgment of "the *bēma* of Christ" has only an incidental bearing on the theme of the present article, and it must not be confounded with the judgment of the "great white throne." From judgment in that sense the believer has absolute immunity: "he cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life" (John 4:26), is the Lord's explicit declaration. He gives the "right to become children of God" "to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12); and it is not by recourse to a criminal court that we deal with the lapses and misdeeds of our children.

DEGREES OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

We have seen then that man is a sinner in virtue both of what he is and what he does. We do what we ought not, and leave undone what we ought to do. For sin may be due to ignorance or carelessness, as well as to evil passions which incite to acts that stifle conscience and outrage law. And we have seen also that every sin gives rise to two great questions which need to be distinguished, though they are in a sense inseparable. The one finds expression in the formula, "guilty or not guilty," and in respect of this no element of limitation or degree is possible. But after verdict, sentence; and when punishment is in question, degrees of guilt are infinite.

It has been said that no two of the redeemed will have the same heaven; and in that sense no two of the lost will have the same hell. This is not a concession to popular heresies on this subject. For the figment of a hell of limited duration either traduces the character of God, or practically denies the work of Christ. If the extinction of being were the fate of the impenitent, to keep them in suffering for an aeon or a century would savor of the cruelty of a tyrant who, having decreed a criminal's death, deferred the execution of the sentence in order to torture him. Far worse indeed than this, for, *ex hypothesi*, the resurrection of the unjust could have no other purpose than to increase their capacity for suffering.

Or, if we adopt the alternative heresy—that hell is a punitive and purgatorial discipline through which the sinner will pass to heaven—we disparage the atonement and undermine the truth of grace. If the prisoner gains his discharge by serving out his sentence, where does grace come in? And if the sinner's sufferings can expiate his sin, the most that can be said for the death of Christ is that it opened a short and easy way to the same goal that could be reached by a tedious and painful journey. But further, unless the sinner is to be made righteous and holy before he enters hell—and in that case, why not let him enter heaven at once?—he will continue unceasingly to sin; and as every fresh sin will involve a fresh penalty, his punishment can never end.

FALSE ARGUMENT

Every treatise in support of these heresies relies on the argument that the words in our English Version, which connote endless duration, represent words in the original text which have no significance. But this argument is exploded by the fact that the critic would be compelled to use these very words if he were set the task of retranslating our version into Greek. For that language has no other terminology to express the thought. And yet it is by trading on *ad captandum* arguments of this kind, and by the prejudices which are naturally excited by partial or exaggerated statements of truth, that these heresies win their way. Attention is thus diverted from the insuperable difficulties which beset them, and from their bearing on the truth of the atonement.

But Christianity sweeps away all these errors. The God of Sinai has not repented of His thunders, but He has fully revealed Himself in Christ. And the wonder of the revelation is not punishment but pardon. The great mystery of the Gospel is how God can be just and yet the Justifier of sinful men. And the Scriptures which reveal that mystery make it clear as light that this is possible only through redemption:

“not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 2:2). Redemption is only and altogether by the death of Christ. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). To bring in limitations here is to limit God.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

In the wisdom of God the full revelation of “eternal judgment” and the doom of the lost, awaited the supreme manifestation of divine grace and love in the Gospel of Christ; and when these awful themes are separated from the Gospel, truth is presented in such a false perspective that it seems to savor of error. For not even the divine law and the penalties of disobedience will enable us to realize aright the gravity and heinousness of sin. This we can learn only at the Cross of Christ. Our estimate of sin will be proportionate to our appreciation of the cost of our redemption. Not “silver and gold”—human standards of value are useless here—but “the precious blood of Christ.” Seemingly more unbelievable than the wildest superstitions of human cults is the Gospel of our salvation. That He who was “Son of God” in all which that title signifies—God manifest in the flesh; for “all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made”—came down to earth, and having lived in rejection and contempt, died a death of shame, and that in virtue of his death He is the propitiation for the world. (1 John 2:2, R. V.)

Here, and only here, can we know the true character and depths of human sin, and here alone can we know, so far as the finite mind can ever know it, the wonders of a divine love that passes knowledge.

And the benefit is to “whosoever believeth.” It was by unbelief that man first turned away from God; how fitting, then, it is that our return to Him should be by faith. If this

Gospel is true—and how few there are who really believe it to be true!—who can dare to impugn the justice of “everlasting punishment”? For Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; the way to God is free, and whosoever will may come. There is no artifice in this and grace is not a cloak to cover favoritism. Unsolved mysteries there are in Holy Writ, but when we read of “God our Saviour,” who will-eth that all men should be saved; and of “Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:3-6), we are standing in the full clear light of day.

This much is as clear as words can make it—and nothing more than this concerns us—that the consequences of accepting or rejecting Christ are final and eternal. But who are they who shall be held guilty of rejecting? What of those who, though living in Christendom, have never heard the Gospel aright? And what of the heathen who have never heard at all? No one can claim to solve these problems without seeming profanely to assume the role of umpire between God and men. We know, and it is our joy to know, that the decision of all such questions rests with a God of perfect justice and infinite love. And let this be our answer to those who demand a solution of them. Unhesitating faith is our right attitude in presence of divine revelation, but where Scripture is silent let us keep silence.*

*The scope of this article is limited not only by exigencies of space but by the nature of the subject. Therefore it contains no special reference to the work of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER IV

THE ATONEMENT*

BY PROFESSOR FRANKLIN JOHNSON, D. D., LL. D.,

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The Christian world as a whole believes in a substitutionary atonement. This has been its belief ever since it began to think. The doctrine was stated by Athanasius as clearly and fully as by any later writer. All the great historic creeds which set forth the atonement at any length set forth a substitutionary atonement. All the great historic systems of theology enshrine it as the very Ark of the Covenant, the central object of the Holy of Holies.

While the Christian world in general believes in a substitutionary atonement, it is less inclined than it once was to regard any existing theory of substitution as entirely adequate. It accepts the substitution of Christ as a fact, and it tends to esteem the theories concerning it only as glimpses of a truth larger than all of them. It observes that an early theory found the necessity of the atonement in the veracity of God, that a later one found it in the honor of God, and that a still later one found it in the government of God, and it deems all these speculations helpful, while it yearns for further light.

FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF IN SUBSTITUTION

If we should ask those who hold this doctrine on what grounds they believe that Christ is the substitute for sinners, there would be many answers, but, perhaps, in only two of them would all voices agree. The first of these grounds

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would be the repeated declarations of Holy Scripture, which are so clear, so precise, so numerous, and so varied that they leave no room to doubt their meaning. The other ground is the testimony of the human heart wherever it mourns its sin or rejoices in an accomplished deliverance. The declaration of the Scriptures that Christ bore our sins on the cross is necessary to satisfy the longings of the soul. The Christian world, in general, would say: "We believe in gravitation, in light, in electricity, in the all-pervading ether, because we must, and not because we can explain them fully. So, we believe that Christ died instead of the sinner because we must, and not because we know all the reasons which led God to appoint and to accept His sacrifice."

THE MORAL-INFLUENCE THEORY

While the Christian world as a whole believes in a substitutionary atonement, the doctrine is rejected by a minority of devout and able men, who present instead of it what has often been called the "moral-influence theory." According to this, the sole mission of Christ was to reveal the love of God in a way so moving as to melt the heart and induce men to forsake sin. The theory is sometimes urged with so great eloquence and tenderness that one would fain find it sufficient as an interpretation at once of the Scriptures and of human want.

Now, no one calls in question the profound spiritual influence of Christ where He is preached as the propitiation of God, and those who believe the doctrine of a substitutionary atonement lift up the cross as the sole appointed means of reaching and saving the lost. They object only when "the moral-influence theory" is presented as a sufficient account of the atonement, to the denial that the work of Christ has rendered God propitious toward man. One may appreciate the moon without wishing that it put out the sun and stars.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST SUBSTITUTION

The advocates of this theory must clear the doctrine of

substitution out of the way. They attempt to do this by advancing many arguments, only two of which need detain us here, since, these removed, the others, of lighter moment, will fall of themselves.

a. Substitution Impossible.

It is said by them that the doctrine of substitution supposes that which is impossible. Guilt can not be transferred from one person to another. Punishment and penalty can not be transferred from a guilty person to an innocent one. An innocent person may be charged with sin, but if so he will be innocent still, and not guilty. An innocent person may suffer, but if so his suffering will not be punishment or penalty. Such is the objection: the Christian world, in believing that a substitutionary atonement has been made by Christ, believes a thing which is contrary to the necessary laws of thought.

The reader will observe that this objection has to do wholly with the definitions of the words guilt and punishment and penalty. It is, perhaps, worthy the serious attention of the theologian who wishes to keep his terms free from offense; but it has no force beyond the sphere of verbal criticism. It is true that guilt, in the sense of personal blameworthiness, can not be transferred from the wrongdoer to the welldoer. It is true that punishment, in the sense of penalty inflicted for personal blameworthiness, cannot be transferred from the wrongdoer to the welldoer. This is no discovery, and it is maintained as earnestly by those who believe in a substitutionary atonement as by those who deny it.

Let us use other words, if these are not clear, but let us hold fast the truth which they were once used to express. The world is so constituted that it bears the idea of substitution engraved upon its very heart. No man or woman or child escapes from suffering inflicted for the faults of others. In thousands of instances these substitutionary sufferings are assumed voluntarily, and are useful. Husbands suffer in order to deliver wives from sufferings richly deserved. Wives suf-

fer in order to deliver husbands from sufferings richly deserved. Children suffer in order to deliver parents from sufferings richly deserved. Parents suffer in order to deliver children from sufferings richly deserved. Pastors often shield guilty churches in this way, and sometimes at the cost of life. Statesmen often shield guilty nations in this way, and sometimes at the cost of life. If, now, we shall teach that Christ suffered in order to deliver us from sufferings which we richly deserve, we shall avoid a strife about words, and shall maintain that, coming into the world as a member of our race, He suffered to the utmost, as many other heroic souls have suffered in a lesser degree, by subjecting Himself to the common rule of vicarious suffering, instituted by God in the formation of human society bound together by ties of sympathy and love, and existing in daily operation from the dawn of history till this present time.

The vicarious sufferings, by means of which the innocent deliver the guilty from sufferings richly deserved, are frequently assumed in the fear that over-much grief will harden the culprit and in a hope that a stay of judgment and the softening lapse of time may lead him to better things. May we not believe that Christ was affected by a similar motive, and has procured that delay of the divine justice at which every thoughtful person wonders? But the vicarious sufferings which we observe in the world are frequently assumed for a stronger reason, in the belief that the culprit already shows signs of relenting, and in the assurance that patient waiting, even at a great cost, will be rewarded with the development of the tender beginnings of a new life which the thunder-storms of untempered equity might destroy. So it was predicted of Christ before His coming that "He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

Thus if Christ suffered in order to deliver us from sufferings which we richly deserved, it was also in order to deliver us from sin by reason of which we deserved them.

b. Substitution Immoral.

The second argument by means of which the advocates of "the moral-influence theory" seek to refute the doctrine of a substitutionary atonement is equally unfortunate with the first, in that, like the first, it criticizes words rather than the thoughts which they are employed to express. The doctrine of a substitutionary atonement, it is said, is immoral. Let us inquire what this immoral doctrine is. The doctrine, it is answered, that our guilt was transferred to Christ and that He was punished for our sins. Here again let us "strive not about words." Let us admit that the theologian might well express himself in other terms, which would create no prejudice against his meaning. But, if he amends his statement, let him retain every part of his meaning. Let him say that Christ suffered in order that guilty man might escape from sufferings richly deserved. Is this teaching immoral? Then the constitution of the human race, ordained by God, is immoral, for, since its ties are those of sympathy and love, human beings are constantly suffering that others may escape sufferings richly deserved. Then sympathy is immoral, for this is what it does. Then love is immoral, for this is what it does. Then the best persons are the most immoral, for they do this oftener than others.

The objector does not maintain that the doctrine of a substitutionary atonement has equally produced immorality wherever it has been proclaimed. He does not venture to test this charge by an appeal to history. The appeal would be fatal. For nineteen hundred years the only great moral advances of the human race have been brought about by the preaching of a substitutionary atonement. "A tree is known by its fruits." It is impossible that a doctrine essentially immoral should be the cause of morality among men.

MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY NOT ADEQUATE

Let us turn now to "the moral-influence theory" and consider why it ought not to be accepted.

a. Too Circumscribed.

As a complete theory of the atonement it is far too narrowly circumscribed, and too near the surface. Were it universally adopted it would be the end of thought on this high theme. The substitutionary atonement promises an eternity of delightful progress in study. It can not be exhausted. All the theories which have been advanced to cast light upon it are valuable, but they leave a whole universe to be explored, and one may hope to extend the field of discovery at any time. To shut us out of this boundless prospect, and limit us to the petty confines of "the moral-influence theory" would be to shrivel the ocean to the dimensions of a pond and bid the admiral sail his navies in it, or to blot out all the worlds save those of the solar system and bid the astronomer enlarge his science.

As the adoption of this circumscribed view would be the end of thought, so it would be the end of emotion. The heart has always been kindled by the preaching of a Christ who bore our sins before God on the cross. By this truth the hardened sinner has been subdued and in it the penitent sinner has found a source of rapture. An atonement of infinite cost, flowing from infinite love, and procuring deliverance from infinite loss, melts the coldest heart and inflames the warmest. To preach a lesser sacrifice would be to spread frost instead of fire.

But the will is reached through the reason and the emotions. That which would cease to challenge profound thought and would cut out the flames of emotion would fail to reach the will and transform the life. The theory makes the death of Christ predominantly scenic, spectacular, an effort to display the love of God rather than an offering to God in its nature necessary for the salvation of man. It struggles in vain to find a worthy reason for the awful sacrifice. Hence it may be charged with essential immorality. In any case, the work of Christ, if interpreted in this manner, will not prove "the power of God unto salvation." The speculation is called "the moral-influence theory," but when preached as an exclusive theory

of the atonement, it is incapable of wielding any profound moral influence. The man who dies to rescue one whom he loves from death is remembered with tears of reverence and gratitude; the man who puts himself to death to show that he loves is remembered with horror.

b. Not Scriptural.

Still further, the chief failure of those who advance this view is in the sphere of exegesis. The Bible is so full of a substitutionary atonement that the reader comes upon it everywhere. The texts which teach it are not rare and isolated expressions; they assemble in multitudes; they rush in troops; they occupy every hill and every valley. They occasion the greatest embarrassment to those who deny that the relation of God to the world is determined by the cross, and various methods are employed by various writers to reduce their number and their force. They are most abundant in the epistles of the Apostle Paul, and some depreciate his authority as a teacher of Christianity. The doctrine is implied in the words which our Lord uttered at the last supper, and some attack these as not genuine. Christ is repeatedly declared to be a propitiation. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood" (Rom. 3:25). "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2). "God sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "Wherefore it behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 3:17). Many special pleas are entered against the plain meaning of these declarations. It does not seem difficult to understand them. A propitiation must be an influence which renders someone propitious, and the person rendered propitious by it must be the person who was offended. Yet some do not hesitate to affirm that these texts regard man as the only being propitiated by the cross. Special tortures are

applied to many other Scriptures to keep them from proclaiming a substitutionary atonement. Christ is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). "Him that knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:2). Such are a few examples of the countless declarations of a substitutionary atonement which the Scriptures make, and with which those who reject the doctrine strive in vain. Any speculation which sets itself against this mighty current flowing through all the Bible is destined to be swept away.

Yet further. A theological theory, like a person, should be judged somewhat by the company it keeps. If it shows an inveterate inclination to associate with other theories which lie wholly upon the surface, which sound no depths and solve no problems, and which the profoundest Christian experience rejects, it is evidently the same in kind.

The theory which I am here opposing tends to consort with an inadequate view of inspiration, and some of its representatives question the inerrancy of the Scripture, even in the matters pertaining to faith and conduct. It tends to consort with an inadequate view of God, and some of its representatives in praising His love forget His holiness and His awful wrath against incorrigible wrongdoers. It tends to consort with an inadequate view of sin, and some of its representatives make the alienation of man from God consist merely in acts, rather than in an underlying state from which they proceed. It tends, finally, to consort with an inadequate view of responsibility and guilt, and some of its representatives teach that these cease when the sinner turns, so that there is no need of propitiation, but only for repentance. A distinguished representative of this theory has written the following sentences: "All righteous claims are satisfied if sin is done away." "Divine law is direct-

ed against sin, and is satisfied when sin is made to cease." "If grace brings an end of sinning, the end sought by law has been attained. It can not be, therefore, that in the sight of God there is any need of satisfying law before grace can save sinners." These words are like the voice of "a very lovely song"; but many a pardoned soul uttered a more troubled strain. A man may cease to sin without reversing the injury he has wrought. In the course of his business, let us suppose, he has defrauded widows and orphans, and they are now dead. Or, in his social life, he has led the young into unbelief and vice, and they now laugh at his efforts to undo the mischief, or have gone into eternity unsaved. In a sense his sinning has come to an end, yet its baneful effects are in full career. His conscience tells him he is responsible not only for the commission of his sins, but for the ruin wrought by his sins. In other words, he is responsible for the entire train of evils which he has put into operation. The depths of his responsibility are far too profound for such light plummet to sound.

These are some of the reasons which lead the Christian world as a whole to reject "the moral-influence theory" of the atonement as inadequate.

CHRIST THE SIN-BEARER

I shall not attempt to set forth any substitutionary theory of the atonement. It is not absolutely necessary that we have a theory. It may be enough for us to hold the doctrine without a theory. The writers of the New Testament did this. The earliest fathers of the Church did it. The world has been profoundly influenced by the preaching of the doctrine before the leaders of the Church began to construct a theory. What was done in the first century may be done in the twentieth. We may proclaim Christ as the Sin-bearer and win multitudes to Him without a theory. Men will welcome the fact, as the famishing welcome water, without asking about its chemical composition.

Yet the Christian thinker will never cease to seek for an adequate theory of the atonement, and it may be well for us to consider some of the conditions with which it is necessary for him to comply in order to succeed in casting any new light upon this divine mystery.

THE ADEQUACY OF SUBSTITUTIONAL ATONEMENT

1. Any theory of the atonement, to be adequate, must proceed from a fair and natural interpretation of all the Biblical statements on the subject. It must not pick and choose among them. It must not throttle any into silence.

2. It must make use of the thought which other generations have found helpful. It must not discard these old materials. Though they are not a completed building, they constitute a foundation which we can not afford to destroy. They may be covered over with an accumulation of verbal infelicities from which we must set them free; but whoever would advance our knowledge of the peace made for us by Christ must not disdain to build upon them.

3. It must take account of all the moral attributes of God, for all are concerned in our salvation. It will find the chief motive of the atonement in the love for God, who "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). It will find one necessity of the atonement in the righteousness of God, who "set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing of His righteousness at this present season; that He might Himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25, 26). It will find one effect of the atonement in the aversion from man of the wrath of God, the product of love and righteousness outraged by sin: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him."

4. It must accord with a profound Christian experience. It will not toy with Socinian interpretations of the Godhead, for the doctrine of the Trinity is the product not only of a sound exegesis and a sound philosophy, but also of a sound Christian experience. It will not picture God as a Father in a sense which would deny His kingship, as a weak-minded father who bewails the rebellion of his children but has no courage to wield the rod. It will not cover His face with feeble smiles or inane tears and deny to it the frowns of wrath, for a profound Christian experience pronounces such portraitures untrue. It will not join those excellent Christians who see in sin only a temporary fault, a disease of the surface, the product chiefly of circumstances, and probably a necessary stage of man to higher things, for these roseate hues are known to be deceitful by all who have entered earnestly into battle with the corruption of our nature and have achieved any great moral triumphs. It will not diminish the guilt of the transgressor, for it is the pardoned transgressor who knows best the awful demerit of his deeds and of the state of alienation from God from which they issued. In short, it will take into account the judgment of those wise souls who have learned "the deep things of God" in much spiritual conflict, and will reach conclusions acceptable to them.

5. It must view the sacrifice of Christ as an event planned from eternity, and effectual with God from eternity. He is "the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). He "was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but manifested at the end of the times" (1 Pet. 1:20). Sin did not take God by surprise. He had foreseen it and had provided a Redeemer before it had led us captive.

6. It must take a broader view of the self-sacrifice of Christ than that once presented to us. His self-sacrifice culminated in His death, and we speak of that very properly as His atonement. But His self-sacrifice had other features.

It had two principal moments—one in eternity, and the other in time. The first was the laying aside of some of His divine attributes that He might take our nature; the second was the endurance of the evils of human life and death, which He would not remove from His lot by miracle. Both are brought before us in the statement that, “being in the form of God, He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even as far as unto death, yea, the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6-8). And all this pathetic history of self-sacrifice is rendered yet more pathetic when we reflect that He anticipated His sufferings from eternity, and moved in the creation and government of the universe with the vision of His coming sorrows ever before His eyes.

We can form no conception of the cost at which He laid aside some of His divine attributes to become incarnate. We can form but little conception of the cost at which He died for the world. No mere man ever laid down His life for others in the sense in which Christ laid down His life for the world. Every man must die at some time; “there is no discharge in that welfare.” When a man sacrifices his life he does but sacrifice a few days or years; he does but lay it down earlier instead of later. But Christ did not choose between dying at one time rather than at another; He chose between dying and not dying. Thus, viewed in any light whatever, the voluntary sufferings of Christ surpass our powers of thought and imagination, reaching infinitely beyond all human experience.

7. It must make much of the effect produced upon God by the infinite, voluntary, and unselfish sacrifice of Christ for the world. Here all human language breaks down, and it sounds feeble to say that God, the Father, admires with the utmost enthusiasm this holy and heroic career of suffering for the salvation of man. Yet we must use such words,

though they are cold. The Scriptures speak of His attitude toward His incarnate Son as one of unbounded appreciation and approval, and tell us that His voice was heard repeatedly from heaven, saying: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." When we say that the sacrifice of Christ is meritorious with God, we mean that it calls forth His supreme admiration. Such was His feeling toward it as He foresaw it from eternity; such was His feeling toward it as He looked upon it while being made; and such is His feeling toward it now, as He looks back upon it and glorifies Christ in honor of it.

8. It must find that the work of Christ has made a vast difference in the relations of God to the fallen world. It was infinite in the love which prompted it and in the self-sacrifice which attended it, and hence infinite in its moral value. We can not but deem it fitting that it should procure for the world an administration of grace. Provided for eternity and efficacious with God from eternity, it has procured an administration of grace from the moment when the first sin was committed.

No doubt it is for this reason that God has suffered the world to stand through all the ages of its rebellious history. He has looked upon it from the beginning in Christ, and hence has treated it with forbearance, with love, with mercy. It did not first come under grace when Christ was crucified; it has always been under grace, because Christ has always offered His sacrifice in the plan and purpose of God, and thus has always exercised a propitiatory influence. The grace of God toward man was not fully revealed and explained till it was made manifest in the person and work of Christ, but it has always been the reigning principle of the divine government. Men are saved by grace since the death of Christ, and they have always been saved by grace when they have been saved at all. The entire argument of the Apostle Paul in his epistles to the Romans and the Galatians has for its purpose the de-

fense of the proposition, that God has always justified **men** by grace through faith, and that there has never been any other way of salvation. The entire administration of God in **human** history is set forth, in the light of "the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world," as one of infinite kindness and leniency, notwithstanding those severities which have expressed His abhorrence of sin.

But if the self-sacrifice of Christ has made a difference in the practical attitude of God toward the world, it has also made a difference in His feeling toward the world. God is one. He is not at war with Himself. He is not a hypocrite. He has not one course of action and a different course of feeling. If He has dealt patiently and graciously with our sinning race it is because He has felt patient and gracious, and the work of His Son, by means of which His administration has been rendered patient and gracious, has rendered His feeling patient and gracious.

It is to this different administration and to its basis in a different feeling that the Scriptures refer when they present Christ to us as "the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but for the whole world."

CHAPTER V

THE GOD-MAN*

BY THE LATE JOHN STOCK

Jesus of Nazareth was not mere man, excelling others in purity of life and conduct and in sincerity of purpose, simply distinguished from other teachers by the fullness of His knowledge. *He is the God-man.* Such view of the person of Messiah is the assured foundation of the entire Scriptural testimony to Him, and it is to be irresistibly inferred from the style and strain in which He habitually spake of Himself. Of this inferential argument of the Saviour we can give here the salient points only in briefest presentation.

1. *Jesus claimed to be the Son of God.* We meet with this title in the Book of Daniel. It was used by Nebuchadnezzar to describe that fourth wonderful personage who walked with the three Hebrew confessors in the fire (3:25), and who was, doubtless, the Lord Jesus Christ revealing Himself in an assumed bodily form to His heroic servants. This majestic title is repeatedly appropriated to Himself by our Master. (See John 5:25; 9:35; 11:4, etc.) In His interview with Nicodemus He designated Himself, "*The Only Begotten Son of God*" (John 3:18).

When confronted with the Sanhedrim, Jesus was closely questioned about His use of this title; and He pleaded guilty to the indictment. (See Matt. 26:63, 64, and 27:43; cf. Luke 22:70, 71, and John 19:7.) It is clear from the narrative that the Jews understood this glorious name in the lips of Jesus to be a blasphemous assertion of divine attributes for Himself.

They understood Jesus to thus claim *equality with God*

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(see John 5:18); and to *make Himself God*. (See John 10:33.) Did they understand Him? Did they overestimate the significance of this title as claimed by our Lord? How easy it would have been for Him to set them right. How imperative were His obligations to do so, not merely to Himself, but to these unhappy men who were thirsting for His blood under a misapprehension. Did not every principle of philanthropy require Him to save them from the perpetration of the terrible murder which He knew they were contemplating? Yes, if they were mistaken, it was a heinous crime in our Lord not to undeceive them. But not a word did He say to soften down the offensiveness of His claim. He allowed it to stand in all its repulsiveness to the Jewish mind, and died without making any sign that He had been misapprehended. He thus accepted the Jewish interpretation of His meaning, and sealed that sense of the title, *Son of God*, with His heart's blood. Nothing can be clearer, then, than the fact that Jesus died without a protest for claiming equality with God, and thus making Himself God. We dare not trust ourselves to write what we must think of Him under such circumstances, if He were a mere man.

2. *Jesus, on several occasions, claimed a divine supremacy in both worlds.* Take for example His description of the final judgment: "The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity: and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41). The kingdom is His, and all the angels of God are His obedient servants.

He declared in the plainest terms that He will preside as the Universal Judge at the last great day, and that His wisdom and authority will award to every man his appropriate doom. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His

glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:31-33). His voice will utter the cheering words, "Come, ye blessed," and the awful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed" (Matt. 25:31-46). Without hesitation, equivocation, or compromise Jesus of Nazareth repeatedly assumed the right and the ability to discriminate the moral character and desserts of all mankind from Adam to the day of doom. His sublime consciousness of universal supremacy relieved the claim of everything like audacity, and only made it the natural sequence of His incarnate Godhead. "All power," He said, "is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18).

This idea germinated in the minds of His followers and apostles. The vivid picture recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew gave a coloring to all their subsequent thoughts about their divine Master. They ever after spake of Him as "ordained to be the Judge of the quick and the dead" (Acts 10:42; 17:31). They testified that "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10).

Thus the mind of John the Apostle was prepared for the subsequent revelations of Patmos, when he heard his glorified Lord claim to "have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18), and saw the vision of the "great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away" (Rev. 20:11).

But who is this that claims to grasp and wield the thunderbolts of eternal retribution; who professes to be able to scrutinize the secret purposes and motives, as well as the words and deeds, of every man that has been born, from the first dawn of personal responsibility to the day of death? Can anything short of indwelling omniscience qualify Him for such

an intricate and complicated and vast investigation? If He could not search "*the reins and the hearts*" (to use His own words to John), how could He give to every one of us according to his works? (Rev. 2:23.) The brain reels when we think of the tremendous transactions of the last day, and the momentous interests then to be decided forever and ever; and reason tells us, that if the Judge who is to preside over these solemnities be a man, He must be a God-man. If Jesus is to be the universal and absolute Judge of our race—a Judge from whose decisions there will be no appeal, He must be "God manifest in the flesh." But what can we think of Him, if in setting up this claim He mislead us?

3. *Jesus always claimed absolute and indisputable power in dealing with every question of moral duty and destiny.* To quote Mr. Newman, the mere deist, "I find Jesus Himself to set up oracular claims. I find an assumption of pre-eminence and unapproachable moral wisdom to pervade every discourse from end to end of the Gospels. If I may not believe that Jesus assumed an oracular manner, I do not know what moral peculiarity in Him I am permitted to believe."* There is no possibility of denying the truth of these words. Jesus claimed to be absolute Lord in the whole region of morals. He settled the meaning and force of old laws, and instituted new ones by His own authority. Take the Sermon on the Mount as an illustration. With what a self-possessed peremptoriness does He define the existing legislation of God, and enlarge its limits! With what conscious dignity does He decide every question in the whole range of human duty with the simple—"But I say unto you!" Seven times in one chapter does he use this formula. (See Matt. 5:20, 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.) And in the application of the sermon He declared Him only to be the wise man and built upon solid rock, who hears His sayings and does them. (Matt. 7:24.) Well might the people be aston-

*In "Phases of Faith," by Francis William Newman, M. A., page 150.

ished at His doctrine; for verily "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28, 29). But the tone which pervades the Sermon on the Mount runs through the whole of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. He ever speaks as if He were the Author and Giver of the law; as if He had the power to modify any of its provisions according to His own ideas of fitness; and as if He were the Supreme Lord of human consciences. His style is utterly unlike that of any inspired teacher before or after Him. They appealed to the law and to the testimony. (See Isa. 8:20.) But Jesus claimed an inherent power to modify and to alter both.

The Sabbath was the symbol of the entire covenant made by God with Israel through the ministry of Moses. (See Exod. 31:12-17.) But Jesus asserted His complete supremacy over this divine institution. These were His emphatic words: "*For the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath day*" (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5). He could, of His own will, relax the terrors of the Jewish Sabbath, and even supersede it altogether by the Christian "Lord's Day." He was Lord of all divine institutions.

And in the Church He claims the right to regulate her doctrines and her ordinances according to His will. The apostles He commissioned to baptize in His name, and charged them to teach their converts to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them. (Matt. 28:19-20.) Thus John was prepared for the sublime vision of the Son of man as "He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. 2:1); and as "He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7).

And the authority which Jesus claimed extends into heaven, and to the final state of things. He affirmed that He would ascend to share His Father's dominion, and to sit in the throne of His glory. (See Matt. 19:28.) The counterpart to which announcement is found in His declaration to John in Patmos:

"to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). The manner in which the Lord spake of Himself in connection with the heavenly state bore much fruit in the hearts and sentiments of His disciples. To them this life was being "absent from the Lord" as to His visible presence: and their one beautiful idea of heaven was that it was being "present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:6, 8). He had taught them to regard Him as their "all in all," even in their eternal state; and with unquestioning faith they cherished the one blessed hope of being forever with the Lord. All other ideas of the celestial world were lost sight of in comparison with this absorbing anticipation.

The very mansions which they were to occupy in the Eternal Father's house, Jesus said, He would assign to them (John 14:2). He asserted His right to give away the crowns and glories of immortal blessedness as if they were His by indisputable right. He wills it, and it is done. He constantly reminded His disciples of rewards which He would give to every servant whom, at His coming, He found to be faithful. (Compare Matt. 24:44 with 45, 46, 47; 25:14-46, etc.)

It is true Jesus will give these honors only to those for whom they are prepared by His Father; for, in their designs of mercy, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are *one*. Still He will, of right, dispense the blessing to all who receive it. For these were our Lord's true words: "To sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but [or, except] it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father" (Matt. 20:23). The language logically implies our Lord's absolute right to give the crowns; but only to such as are appointed to these honors by the Father.

These ideas are repeated in vision to John. Jesus gives "right to the tree of life" (Rev. 2:7). In the praises of the redeemed host, as described in that marvelous Apocalypse, they ever ascribe their salvation and glory to Jesus, and the sinless

angels swell the chorus of Immanuel's praises, while the universe, from its myriad worlds, echoes the strain. (Rev. 5:8-14.)

In the description of the final state of things—a state which shall be subsequent to the millennium (whatever that may be)—(Rev. 20:1-10), and also to the final judgment of both righteous and wicked (Rev. 20:11-15), and to the act of homage and fealty described in 1 Cor. 15:24-28, we find the Lamb still and forever on the throne. The Church is still “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Rev. 21:9). In that consummated state of all things, “The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev. 21:22), the glory of God lightens it, “and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Rev. 21:23), the pure river of water of life still flows from beneath the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 22:1), “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3, 4). Throughout the Apocalypse we never find Jesus among the worshippers. He is there the worshipped One on the throne, and with that picture the majestic vision closes.

The inspired apostles had imbibed these ideas from the personal teaching of their Lord, and subsequent revelations did but expand in their minds the seed-thoughts which He had dropped there from His own sacred lips. Paul nobly expressed the sentiments of all his brethren when he wrote, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8). But surely He who claims supremacy, absolute and indisputable, in morals, in divine institutions, in the Church on earth, in heaven, and in a consummated universe forever, must be Lord of all, manifest in human form. If he were not, *what* must He have been to advance such assumptions, and *what* must the book be which enforces them?

4. *Jesus asserted His full possession of the power to forgive sins.* The moral instincts of the Jews were right when they put the question, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2:7.) We do not wonder that, with their ideas of Christ, they asked in amazement, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" (Luke 7:49), or that they exclaimed, in reference to such a claim, from such a quarter, "This man blasphemeth" (Matt. 9:3).

And yet Christ declared most emphatically, on more than one occasion, His possession of this divine prerogative, and healed the palsied man in professed attestation of the fact. (Luke 5:24.) Those who would eliminate the miraculous element from the second narrative altogether, must admit that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all relate most circumstantially that Jesus did at least profess to work a miracle in support of His claim to possess power to forgive sins. If He wrought the miracle, His claim is established; and if He did not work it, but cheated the people, then away with Him forever as an ar-rant impostor! But if He wrought it, and proved His claim, He must be equal with His Father; for the Jews were right, and no one "can forgive sins but God only." Could a mere man cancel with a word the sin of a creature against his Maker? The very thought is a blasphemy.

5. *Jesus claimed the power to raise His own body from the grave, to quicken the souls of men into spiritual life, and to raise all the dead at the last great day.* Jesus likened His body to a temple which the Jews should destroy, and which He would raise up again in three days. (John 2:19-21.) He affirmed that He had power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again. (John 10:18.) He declared that the *spiritually* dead—for the physical resurrection is spoken of afterward as a distinct topic—should hear His voice and live. (John 5:25.) And then He tells us not to wonder at this, for the day is coming when, by His omnific fiat, all the generations of the dead "shall come forth; they that have done good, unto

the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

But if Jesus were not, in some mysterious sense, the Lord of His own life, what power had He to dispose of it as He pleased? And how could He recall it when gone? And how could he communicate spiritual life, if He were not its Divine Fountain? And how could He raise the dead from their graves, if He were not the Almighty Creator? All these claims, if genuine, necessitate faith in the Godhead of Jesus.

6. *Jesus declared that He had the ability to do all His Father's works.* The Saviour had healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day. When accused by the Jews of sin for this act, our Lord justified Himself by the ever-memorable words, "My Father worketh hitherto [that is, on the Sabbath day in sustaining and blessing the worlds], and I work"—on the same day, *therefore*, in healing the sick,—thus indirectly asserting His right to do all that His Father did, and, as the Jews put it, claiming *such* a Sonship as made Him "equal with God." But our Lord did not abate one iota of His claim. True, He admitted that, *as the Incarnate Mediator*, He had received His authority from the Father, but He declared that "What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (John 5:17-19). Now, no language can overestimate the sublimity of this claim. Christ affirmed that He possessed full right and ability to do all that the Eternal Father had the right and ability to do. Was such language ever used by the most inspired or the most daring of mere mortals? We do not forget that our Lord was careful to declare that the Father had committed all judgment to Him (John 5:22), but had He not Himself been a partaker of the Godhead how could He, as the Incarnate One, have been qualified to be armed with the prerogative so vast? He who can do all the works of God must be God!

7. *Jesus spake of Himself as the greatest gift of infinite mercy even.* In His conversation with Nicodemus, Christ

spake of Himself in these terms: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16), by which our Lord evidently meant to convey the idea that the gift of the Son was the richest gift of divine love.

And this idea proved powerfully germinant in the minds of the apostles. They elaborated the argument. By the gift of Christ above all others, they taught us: "God commended His love towards us" (Rom. 5:8; see, too, John 4:10). They reasoned thus, having learned their logic from the lips of their Lord, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). The argument of the apostle is *from the greater to the less*. It assumes that Christ Jesus is greater than all things. It would have no force on any other principle. More than this, it assumes that Christ is *infinitely* greater than all things, so that all the other expressions of divine goodness to our race dwindle into insignificance when compared with the gift of Christ. But can such representations as these be harmonized with the notion that Christ is merely a gifted man? Would they not deserve to be called *hyperbole run mad* on such an hypothesis? And imagine a mere man to stand forward and proclaim himself the choicest gift of God's love to our race. What a monstrous exaggeration and egotism! If Christ be greater than all other divine gifts combined, must He not be the God-man? On the evangelical hypothesis such representations are seen to be neither bombast nor rhetorical exaggeration, but sober, solid truth; and we can say with the seraphic Paul, without reserve: "Thanks be unto God for His *unspeakable* gift" (2 Cor. 9:15).

8. *Jesus announced Himself as the center of rest for the human soul.* Who has not thrilled under the mighty spell of those mighty words: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and

ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30). In this invitation our Lord proclaims Himself to be everything to the soul. We are to come to Him, to take His yoke upon us, and to learn of Him. In receiving *Him* we shall find rest unto our souls, for *He* will give us rest.

Now, God alone is the resting-place of the human spirit. In Him, and in Him only, can we find assured peace. But Jesus claims to be our rest. Must He not, then, be God Incarnate? And very noticeable is the fact that, in the same breath in which He speaks of Himself in these august terms, He says: "I am meek and lowly in heart." But where were His meekness and lowliness in making such a claim, if He were simply a man like ourselves?

In the same spirit are those memorable passages in which this wonderful personage speaks of Himself as our peace. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27). "These words have I spoken unto you, that in *Me* ye might have peace" (John 16:33). Thus ever does the Lord concentrate our thoughts upon *Himself*. But what must He be to be worthy of such supreme attention?

9. *Jesus permitted Thomas to adore Him as his Lord and his God, and pronounced an eulogium upon the faith thus displayed.* (John 20:28.) On this fact we quote the admirable comment of Dean Alford: "The Socinian view, that these words, '*my Lord and my God,*' are merely an exclamation, is refuted, (1) By the fact that no such exclamations were in use among the Jews. (2) By the *εἶπεν αὐτῷ* (he said to *Him*, that is, Christ). (3) By the impossibility of referring *ὁ κύριός μου*, my Lord, to another than Jesus. (See verse 13.) (4) By the New Testament usage of expressing the vocative by the nominative with an article. (5) By the utter psychological absurdity of such a supposition; that one just convinced of the presence of Him whom he deeply

loved, should, instead of addressing Him, break out into an irrelevant cry. (6) By the further absurdity of supposing that if such were the case, the Apostle John, who, of all the sacred writers, most constantly keeps in mind the object for which he is writing, should have recorded anything so beside that object. (7) By the intimate connection of *πεπίστευκας*, *thou hast believed*. (See next verse.)

“Dismissing it, therefore, we observe that this is *the highest confession* of faith which has yet been made; and that it shows that (though not yet fully) the meaning of the previous confessions of His being ‘*the Son of God*’ was understood. Thus John, in the very close of his Gospel iterates the testimony with which he began it—to the Godhead of the Word who became flesh, and, by this closing confession, shows how *the testimony of Jesus to Himself* had gradually deepened and exalted the apostles’ conviction, from the time when they knew Him only as *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Ἰωσήφ* (1:46), ‘the son of Joseph,’ till now, when He is acknowledged as their Lord and their God.” (Alford’s Greek New Testament, on the passage.)

These judicious remarks leave nothing to be added as to the real application of the words, “my Lord and my God.” But how did the Saviour *receive* this act of adoration? He commended it, and held it up for the imitation of the coming ages. “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (29). He thus most emphatically declared His Lordship and Godhead. But how fearful was His crime in so doing, if He was only a Socinian Christ!

This conversation produced a deep impression upon the apostolical mind, and upon the early Church. Stephen invoked Jesus in prayer with his dying breath. (Acts 7:59.) Paul thrice besought the Lord (Jesus) in supplication, that this thorn in the flesh might be taken from him, and received an answer from the Lord. (2 Cor. 12:8, compared

with the *next* verse, the 9th.) The prayer was offered to Jesus, and was responded to by Jesus, as the context demonstrates.

The primitive disciples are thus described: "All that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2).

Every convert was, by Christ's orders, baptized in His name conjointly with that of the Father and the Holy Spirit; and thus the whole Church was taught to adore Him as equal with God at the solemn hour of religious profession. (Matt. 28:19.)

The apostolical benediction invokes Jesus in prayer with God and the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. 13:14), and the entire sacred record closes with a solemn litany to the Son: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Rev. 22:21). Again we ask, Who is this if He be not the God-man?

10. *Jesus indirectly compared Himself with God.* He did so in these words: "No man knoweth the Son [Luke gives it, "Who the Son is"], but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father [Luke gives it, "Who the Father is"], save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (See Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:22). These statements are, perhaps, the most remarkable that fell even from the lips of Jesus. In them He asserted the Son to be as great a mystery as the Father, and consequently as difficult to know. This was in effect claiming equality with God. Nothing less can be made of it. Then, too, the Lord professed such a knowledge of God as can only be possessed by God. He indeed asserted that He knew the Father as well as the Father knew Him. Altogether, no language can well be more shockingly familiar and profane than these words of the Saviour were, if He were no more than a man. Let the reader well ponder them in the version both of Matthew and Luke.

On one occasion our Lord declared, "My Father is greater than all" (John 10:29); and on another, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). But if our Lord was *only* a man, what need was there that He should tell us *this*? What should we think of any mere mortal who should stand up in our midst, and deliberately tell us that the Eternal Father is greater than he? Should we not question his sanity? Or should we not look upon the very comparison as a blasphemy? For what can justify a creature in such a virtual likening of himself to God? We are compelled to the conclusion that there must have been some other element in our Lord's nature, besides the human, which warranted Him in making so remarkable a statement. What danger was there that we should fail to recognize the superiority of the Eternal Father to the man Christ Jesus, if the latter was *no more than* a man? These words, generally supposed to be a stronghold of Unitarianism, are, in truth, an indirect testimony to the orthodox faith. For what comparison can there be between the Creator and a mere creature, between Infinity and one who is "less than nothing and vanity"?

11. *Jesus demands of us an unhesitating and unlimited faith in Himself; such faith, in short, as we should only exercise in God.* We are to believe in Him for the salvation of our entire being; not merely as pointing out to us the way to heaven, but as being *Himself* the way. He puts faith in Him in the same category as faith in the Father. (John 14:1.) The spirit of His teaching about the faith to be reposed in Him is given in His words to the woman of Samaria: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:10-14). Unless we exercise faith in His person and work,

figuratively called eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we have no life in us (John 6:53); but if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever (51). Those who have given themselves up into the arms of Christ by faith receive eternal life from Him, and shall never perish. (John 10:28.) They are as much in the arms of Jesus as in the arms of the Father; and their safety is as much secured by one as by the other (compare 28, 29, 30). In fact, in this gracious transaction the Son and the Father are one (30). Well might the Jews, with their views of His origin, take up stones to stone Him for these claims, saying as they did it, "We stone Thee for blasphemy, because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God" (33). Our Lord's vindication of Himself, by a reference to the language of Psalm 82:6, is an illustration of the *argument from the less to the greater*. If in any sense the Jewish rulers might be called gods, how much more properly might *He*, the only begotten Son of the Father, be so designated? "Without Me ye can do nothing," is in short the essence of the Saviour's teaching about Himself. (See John 15:1-5.)

This is the sum of the Gospel message: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall be saved. It was a demand repeatedly and earnestly pressed by the Saviour, and inculcated by His apostles; and we say deliberately, that to exercise such a faith in Jesus as He required and the Gospel enforces, would, *with Socinian views*, be to expose ourselves to the terrible anathema: "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and that maketh flesh in his arm" (Jer. 17:5). How could my soul be safe in the arms of a mere man? How dare I trust my eternal redemption to the care of such a Christ? And on what principle did Paul say: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil 4:13). And how can Jesus be "All in all" to true believers of every nation? (Col. 3:11.)

12. *The affection and devotion to His glory, which Jesus demands, are such as can be properly yielded only to God.* As we are to trust Christ for everything, so we are to give up everything for Him, should He demand the sacrifice. This was a doctrine which the Lord repeatedly taught. Let our readers study Matt. 10:37-39, and the parallel passage, Luke 14:26, 27, and they will see at once how uncompromising is the Saviour's demand. Father, mother, son, daughter, wife, and even life itself are all to be sacrificed, if devotion to Christ necessitates the surrender. All creatures, and all things, and our very lives are to be to us as nothing when compared with Christ. God Himself demands no less of us, and no more. What more *could* the Eternal Creator require? The moral law says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and Him only shalt thou serve." But Christ bids us love *Him* thus, and demands of us the homage and sacrifice of our whole being; now, if He be not the *Author* of our being, what right has He to urge such a demand upon us? I could not love Christ as He requires to be loved, if I did not believe in Him as the Incarnate God. To do so with Socinian views would be idolatry. Yet the motives which reigned in the hearts of inspired apostles are summed up in this one: "The love of Christ constraineth us," and they laid down the law, that all men are henceforth to live "not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). And Jesus declared that our eternal destiny will take its character from our compliance or non-compliance with His demands: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32, 33, 38-42, cf. Matt. 25: 45, 46), and the sentiment is echoed in apostolical teaching, the language of which is, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (1 Cor. 16:22). But clearly

the suspension of such tremendous issues on the decree of our love for the person of a mere creature, is an idea utterly revolting to our moral sense. He must be the God-man.

13. *Jesus set Himself forth as the appropriate end of our lives and of all divine providences.* He requires us to live for Him, and for His glory. As we have seen, life is to be sacrificed, if fidelity to Him shall so require. The sickness of Lazarus, He taught, was ordered, "that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (John 11:4). He expounded the scope of the Holy Spirit's mission in one pregnant sentence: "*He shall glorify Me*" (John 16:14; John 15:26).

This Messianic reading of all things proved wonderfully suggestive. It is amplified in the apostolical Epistles. Thus, Christ is "Lord both of the dead and the living" (Rom. 14:9). The great object of apostolic desire was, that Christ might be magnified in their bodies, whether by life or by death. (Phil. 1:20.) The early Church's one idea of the present state was: "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). And they looked forward to the final Epiphany, because Christ would then "come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," and because His name will then be "glorified in you" (2 Thess. 1:10-12).

Under Him, as the Universal Head, all things are finally to be gathered, and towards this consummation all things are now working. (See Eph. 1:10.)

Now, such a presentation of Christ by Christ, and by His apostles inspired by Himself and His Spirit, we cannot harmonize with Socinian views. For surely He, *for whose glory* we are to live, and the whole universe exists, must be the Lord of all, God over all, blessed for evermore. What right has our Lord to be the supreme End of life, if He be not its Source, its Preserver, in short, its God?

14. *Very suggestive, too, are those passages in which Jesus promised His continued presence to His disciples after His ascension.* Beautiful are the words: "Where two or three

are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). One of the last promises of our Lord was, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). No perverse criticism can explain away these assurances; they guarantee the perpetual, personal presence of Jesus with all His disciples to the end of time.

And this idea had a wonderful influence over the thoughts and actions of the men whom Jesus inspired. They lived as those who were perpetually under their Lord's eye. Thus one speaks in the name of all: "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent [from Christ as to his bodily presence, see 6 and 8], we may be accepted of Him [Christ]" (2 Cor. 5:9). Though denied His bodily presence, His divine they knew to be ever with them; hence they labored to please Him, and the best wish they could breathe for each other was, "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit" (2 Tim. 4:22).

And John saw Him in vision ever holding the ministerial stars in His right hand, and walking in the midst of the golden lamps—the churches. (Rev. 2:1.)

But how can we explain such representations as these, if Messiah be possessed of but one nature—the human, which must of necessity be local and limited as to its presence? Who is this that is always with His disciples in all countries at the same moment, but the Infinite One in a human form? We feel His presence; we know He is with us; and in this fact we have evidence that He is more than a man.

The line of argument we have been pursuing is by no means exhausted, but our space is filled. Every time we read the New Testament through, we detect new illustrations of the force of the testimony illustrated in this paper. Let the reader re-peruse for himself the sacred record with an eye to the hints which we have thrown out. Let him weigh again the old familiar phrases in which the Lord speaks, or is spoken of, and ask himself how he can explain them on any other

principle than the orthodox view of our Lord's person and work, and he will be astonished to find how this view is woven into the very texture of the whole Gospel. Jesus Christ was neither the Holy One, nor the Just One, if He were not the God-man. (See Acts 3:14; Acts 2:27; Acts 7:52.) In short, we must tear up our Bibles and wait for a new Christ, if He of Nazareth be not what all His teachings compel us to believe He was, God Incarnate.

A Socinian may well ask: "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" (Matt. 13:54); but to us that question is forever answered by the assurance that "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The argument is *cumulative*, and must be looked at as a whole as well as in detail. To us it appears irresistible.

Let no Unitarian seek to evade its force by taking refuge in those passages which affirm Christ's inferiority, as man and mediator, to His Father; such as Mark 13:32; John 10:29, and John 14:28. Such passages as these are not to the purpose. No one denies that, as man and mediator, our Lord was inferior to His Father. But to prove that He was inferior in one sense, does not disprove that He was equal in another sense. When you have demonstrated that He was a man, you have not shaken, or even touched, the evidence that He was God. The Saviour had a human soul with its natural limitation of knowledge, and a human body with exposure to death. This is admitted on all sides. The orthodox believe it as truly as their Unitarian friends. But the Gospel testimony teaches us something more. It reveals the Godhood of Jesus of Nazareth, and tells us that He thought it no robbery to claim equality with His Father. It is, therefore, disingenuous, or, at least, illogical, to quote testimonies to the humanity of the Christ in reply to the proof of His possession of a divine nature as well. The two questions are quite distinct. It is a

non sequitur to affirm that Jesus is not God because He was a man. The point to be demonstrated is *that He was not both*.

There are two classes of Scriptures relating to our Lord: the first, affirming His possession of a human nature, with all its innocent frailties and limitations; the second, ascribing to Him a divine nature, possessed of the attributes of Godhood, performing divine works, and worthy of supreme honor and worship. Unitarians can only fairly explain one of these classes of Scriptures, the former; but Trinitarians can accept both classes, and expound them in their integrity and fullness. We are not stumbled by evidences that Jesus was "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh." We rejoice in Him as in one "touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" but we have no need to refine away, by a subtle and unfair criticism, the ascription to His person of divine perfections and works.

We gladly recognize the learning and the talents of many of the prominent Unitarian divines. We know that by the side of some of them we are but babes in intellect and attainment. But we remember that there was a time when "Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25).

The times demand of us a vigorous re-assertion of the old truths, which are the very foundations of the Gospel system. *Humanity needs a Christ whom all can worship and adore.* The mythical account of Strauss' "Leben Jesu"; the unreal and romantic Christ of Renan's "Vie de Jesus"; and even the merely human Christ of "Ecce Homo," can never work any deliverance in the earth. Such a Messiah does not meet the yearnings of fallen human nature. It does not answer the pressing query, "How shall man be just with God?" It supplies no effective or sufficient agency for the regeneration of man's moral powers. It does not bring God down to us in our nature. Such a Christ we may criticise and admire, as we would Socrates, or Plato, or Milton, or Shakespeare; but

we cannot trust Him with our salvation; we cannot love Him with all our hearts; we cannot pour forth at His feet the homage of our whole being; for to do so would be idolatry.

A so-called Saviour, whose only power to save lies in the excellent moral precepts that He gave, and the pure life that He lived; who is no longer the God-man, but the mere man; whose blood had no sacrificial atoning or propitiatory power in the moral government of Jehovah, but was simply a martyr's witness to a superior system of ethics—is not the Saviour of the four Gospels, or of Paul, or Peter, or John. It is not under the banners of such a Messiah that the Church of God has achieved its triumphs. The Christ of the New Testament, of the early Church, of universal Christendom; the Christ, the power of whose name has revolutionized the world and raised it to its present level, and under whose guidance the sacramental host of God's redeemed are advancing and shall advance to yet greater victories over superstition and sin, is Immanuel, God with us, in our nature, whose blood "cleanseth us from all sin," and who is "able to save, even to the uttermost, all that come unto God through Him."

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY NARRATIVES OF GENESIS

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By the early narratives of Genesis are to be understood the first eleven chapters of the book—those which precede the times of Abraham. These chapters present peculiarities of their own, and I confine attention to them, although the critical treatment applied to them is not confined to these chapters, but extends throughout the whole Book of Genesis, the Book of Exodus, and the later history with much the same result in reducing them to legend.

We may begin by looking at the matter covered by these eleven chapters with which we have to deal. See what they contain. First, we have the sublime proëm to the Book of Genesis, and to the Bible as a whole, in the account of the Creation in Gen. 1. However it got there, this chapter manifestly stands in its fit place as the introduction to all that follows. Where is there anything like it in all literature? There is nothing anywhere, in Babylonian legend or anywhere else. You ask perhaps what interest has religious faith in the doctrine of creation—in any theory or speculation on how the world came to be? I answer, it has the very deepest interest. The interest of religion in the doctrine of creation is that this doctrine is our guarantee for the dependence of all things on God—the ground of our assurance that everything in nature and Providence is at His disposal. “My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.” Suppose there was anything in the universe that was not created by God—that existed independently of Him—how could we be sure that that element might not thwart, defeat, destroy the fu^l.

fillment of God's purposes? The Biblical doctrine of creation forever excludes that supposition.

Following on this primary account of creation is a second narrative in a different style—from chapter 2 to 4—but closely connected with the first by the words, "In the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven." This is sometimes spoken of as a second narrative of creation, and is often said to contradict the first. But this is a mistake. As the critic Dillmann points out, this second narrative is not a history of creation in the sense of the first at all. It has nothing to say of the creation of either heaven or earth, of the heavenly bodies, of the general world of vegetation. It deals simply with man and God's dealings with man when first created, and everything in the narrative is regarded and grouped from this point of view. The heart of the narrative is the story of the temptation and the fall of man. It is sometimes said that the Fall is not alluded to in later Old Testament Scripture, and therefore cannot be regarded as an essential part of revelation. It would be truer to say that the story of the Fall, standing there at the commencement of the Bible, furnishes the key to all that follows. What is the picture given in the whole Bible—Old Testament and New? Is it not that of a world turned aside from God—living in rebellion and defiance to Him—disobedient to His calls and resisting His grace? What is the explanation of this universal apostasy and transgression if it is not that man has fallen from his first estate? For certainly this is not the state in which God made man, or wishes him to be. The truth is, if this story of the Fall were not there at the beginning of the Bible, we would require to put it there for ourselves in order to explain the moral state of the world as the Bible pictures it to us, and as we know it to be. In chapter 4, as an appendage to these narratives, there follows the story of Cain and Abel, with brief notices of the beginning of civilization in the line of Cain, and of the start of a holier line in Seth.

Next, returning to the style of Gen. 1—what is called the “Elohistic” style—we have the genealogical line of Seth extending from Adam to Noah. You are struck with the longevity ascribed to those patriarchal figures in the dawn of time, but not less with the constant mournful refrain which ends each notice, Enoch’s alone excepted, “and he died.” This chapter connects directly with the account of creation in Genesis 1, but presupposes equally the narrative of the Fall in the intervening chapters. We often read in critical books assertions to the contrary of this. The “priestly writer,” we are told, “knows nothing” of a Fall. But that is not so. Wellhausen, that master-critic, is on my side here. Speaking of the so-called “priestly” sections in the story of the flood, he says, “The flood is well led up to; in Q. [that is his name for the priestly writing] we should be inclined to ask in surprise how the earth has come all at once to be so corrupted after being in the best of order. Did we not know it from J. E.? [that is, the Fall Narrative].” Another leading critical authority, Dr. Carpenter, writes in the same strain.

Then you come to the flood story in Gen. 6:9, in which two narratives are held to be interblended. There are two writers here, criticism says—the Elohistic and the Jehovistic,—yet criticism must own that these two stories fit wonderfully into one another, and the one is incomplete without the other. If one, for instance, gives the command to Noah and his house to enter the Ark, it is the other that narrates the building of the Ark. If one tells of Noah’s “house,” it is the other that gives the names of Noah’s sons. What is still more striking, when you compare these Bible stories with the Babylonian story of the deluge, you find that it takes both of these so-called “narratives” in Genesis to make up the one complete story of the tablets. Then, following on the flood and the covenant with Noah, the race of mankind spreads out again as depicted in the table of nations in chapter 10. In verse 25 it is noted that in the

days of Peleg was the earth divided; then in chapter 11 you have the story of the divine judgment at Babel confusing human speech, and this is followed by a new genealogy extending to Abraham.

Such is a brief survey of the material, and on the face of it it must be acknowledged that this is a wonderfully well-knit piece of history of its own kind which we have before us, not in the least resembling the loose, incoherent, confused mythologies of other nations. There is nothing resembling it in any other history or religious book, and when we come to speak of the great ideas which pervade it, and give it its unity, our wonder is still increased.

Ah, yes, our critical friends will tell us, the great ideas are there, but they were not originally there. They were put in later by the prophets. The prophets took the old legends and put these grand ideas into them, and made them religiously profitable. If that was the way in which God chose to give us His revelation, we would be bound gratefully to accept it, but I must be pardoned if I prefer to believe that the great ideas did not need to be put into these narratives; that they were there in the things themselves from the very first.

The truth is, a great deal here depends on your method of approach to these old narratives. There is a saying, "Everything can be laid hold of by two handles," and that is true of these ancient stories. Approach them in one way and you make them out to be a bundle of fables, legends, myths, without historical basis of any kind. Then wonderful feats can be performed in the handling of the myths. Prof. Gunkel, for example, that very capable Old Testament scholar, is not content with the analysis of books and chapters and verses, but adds to it the analysis of personalities. He will show you, for instance, that Cain is composed originally out of three distinct figures, blended together, Noah out of another three, and so on. I have ventured to describe Gun-

kel's theory as the explanation of the patriarchal history on the ancient principle of a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Only that does not quite answer to the kind of history we have in these narratives, which stand in such organic connection with the rest of revelation. Approach these narratives in another way and they are the oldest and most precious traditions of our race; worthy in their intrinsic merit of standing where they do at the commencement of the Word of God, and capable of vindicating their right to be there; not merely vehicles of great ideas, but presenting in their own archaic way—for archaic they are in form—the memory of great historic truths. The story of the Fall, for example, is not a myth, but enshrines the shuddering memory of an actual moral catastrophe in the beginning of our race, which brought death into the world and all our woe.

Coming now to deal a little more closely with these narratives, I suppose I ought to say something on the critical aspect of the question. But this I must pass over briefly, for I want to get to more important matters. In two points only I would desire to indicate my decided break with current critical theory. The one is the carrying down of the whole Levitical system and history connected with it to the post-exilic age. That, I believe, is not a sound result of criticism, but one which in a very short time will have to be abandoned, as indeed it is already being abandoned or greatly modified in influential quarters. This applies specially to the date of Gen. 1. Professor Delitzsh, a commentator often cited as having come round practically to the newer critical view, takes a firm stand here. In his new commentary on Gen. 1, he tells us: "The essential matters in the account of the creation are among the most ancient foundations of the religion of Israel—there are no marks of style which constrain us to relegate the Elohistic account of the creation to the exile—it is in any case a tradition reaching back to the Mosaic period."

The other point on which I dissent is the idea that the Israelites began their religious history without the idea of the one true God, Maker of heaven and earth; that they began with a tribal god, the storm god of Sinai or some other local deity, and gradually clothed him from their own minds with the attributes which belong to Jehovah. This, which is the product of the evolutionary theory of religion, and not a fair deduction from any evidence we possess, I entirely disbelieve, and I am glad to say that this view also is being greatly modified or parted with. It is this theory, however, which lies behind a great deal of the criticism of these early narratives of Genesis. Those things, it is said, could not be; those great ideas could not be there; for man at that early stage could not have evolved them. Even God, it appears, could not have given them to him. Our "could be's," however, will have to be ruled by facts, and my contention is that the facts are adverse to the theory as currently set forth.

I come now to the question, Is there any external corroboration or confirmation of these early narratives in Genesis? Here let me say a little of the relation of these narratives to Babylonia. Everyone has heard something of the wonderful discoveries in Babylonia, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the brilliance and importance of these marvelous discoveries. The point which concerns us chiefly is the extraordinary light thrown on the high culture of early Babylonia. Here, long before the time of Abraham, we find ourselves in the midst of cities, arts, letters, books, libraries, and Abraham's own age—that of Hammurabi—was the bloomtime of this civilization. Instead of Israel being a people just emerging from the dim dawn of barbarism, we find in the light of these discoveries that it was a people on whom from its own standpoint the ends of the earth had come—heir to the riches of a civilization extending millenniums into the past. If you say this creates a difficulty in representing the chronology

(I may touch on this later), I answer that it gives much greater help by showing how the knowledge of very ancient things could be safely handed down. For us the chief interest of these discoveries is the help they give us in answering the question, How far do these narratives in Genesis embody for us the oldest traditions of our race? There are two reasons which lead us to look with some confidence to Babylonia for the answer to this question. For one thing, in early Babylonia we are already far back into the times to which many of these traditions relate; for another, the Bible itself points to Babylonia as the original city of those traditions. Eden was in Babylonia, as shown by its rivers, the Euphrates and Tigris. It was in Babylonia the Ark was built; and on a mountain in the neighborhood of Babylonia the Ark rested. It was from the plain of Shinar, in Babylonia, that the new distribution of the race took place. To Babylonia, therefore, if anywhere, we are entitled to look for light on these ancient traditions, and do we not find it? I read sometimes with astonishment of the statement that Babylonian discovery has done little or nothing for the confirmation of these old parts of Genesis—has rather proved that they belong to the region of the mythical.

Take only one or two examples. I leave over meanwhile the Babylonian story of the creation and the flood, and take that old tenth chapter of Genesis, the "Table of Nations." Professor Kautzsch, of Halle, a critic of note, says of that old table, "The so-called Table of Nations remains, according to all results of monumental exploration, an ethnographic original document of the first rank which nothing can replace." In this tenth chapter of Genesis, verses 8-10, we have certain statements about the origin of Babylonian civilization. We learn (1) that Babylonia is the oldest of civilizations; (2) that Assyrian civilization was derived from Babylonia; and (3) strangest of all, that the founders of Babylonian civilization were not Semites, but Hamites—descendants of

Cush. Each of these statements was in contradiction to old classical notices and to what was currently believed till recently about those ancient people. Yet it will not be disputed that exploration has justified the Bible on each of these points. Assyria, undoubtedly, was younger than Babylonia; it derived its civilization, arts, religion, institutions, all that it had, from Babylonia. Strangest of all, the originators of Babylonia civilization, the Accadians, or Sumerians, were a people not of Semitic, but apparently of Turanian or what the Bible would call Hamitic stock. Take another instance; in verse 22 Elam appears as the son of Shem, but here was a difficulty. The Elamites of history were not a Semitic, but an Aryan people, and their language was Aryan. Even Professor Hommel, in defending the ancient Hebrew tradition, thought he had to admit an error here. But was there? A French expedition went out to excavate Susa, the capital of Elam, and below the ruins of the historical Elam discovered bricks and other remains of an older civilization, with Babylonian inscriptions showing the people to be of Semitic stock; so Elam was, after all, the son of Shem. In the story of the Tower of Babel in chapter 11, again is it not interesting to find the Bible deriving all the streams of mankind from the Plain of Shinar, and to find archaeology bringing corroborative proof that probably all the greater streams of civilization do take their origin from this region? For that is the view to which the opinions of scholars now tend.

Glance now at the stories of Creation, of Paradise, and of the Deluge. The story of Paradise and the Fall we may dismiss in this connection, for except in the case of the picture on an ancient seal which does bear some relation to the story of the temptation in Eden, there has yet been no proper parallel to the Bible story of the fall. On the other hand, from the ruins of Assyrian libraries have been disinterred fragments of an account of creation, and the Babylonian version of the story of the deluge, both of which have been

brought into comparison with the narratives of the Bible. Little need be said of the Babylonian creation story. It is a debased, polytheistic, long-drawn-out, mythical affair, without order, only here and there suggesting analogies to the divine works in Genesis. The flood story has much more resemblance, but it too is debased and mythical, and lacks wholly in the higher ideas which give its character to the Biblical account. Yet this is the quarry from which our critical friends would have us derive the narratives in the Bible. The Israelites borrowed them, it is thought, and purified these confused polytheistic legends and made them the vehicles of nobler teaching. We need not discuss the time and manner of this borrowing, for I cannot see my way to accept this version of events at all. There is not only no proof that these stories were borrowed in their crude form from the Babylonians, but the contrast in spirit and character between the Babylonians' products and the Bible's seems to me to forbid any such derivation. The debased form may conceivably arise from corruption of the higher, but not vice versa. Much rather may we hold with scholars like Delitzsch and Kittel, that the relation is one of cognateness, not of derivation. These traditions came down from a much older source, and are preserved by the Hebrews in their purer form. This appears to me to explain the phenomena as no theory of derivation can do, and it is in accordance with the Bible's own representation of the line of revelation from the beginning along which the sacred tradition can be transmitted.

Leaving Babylonia, I must now say a few words on the scientific and historical aspects of these narratives. Science is invoked to prove that the narratives of creation in Genesis 1, the story of man's origin and fall in chapters 2 and 3, the account of patriarchal longevity in chapters 5 and 11, the story of the deluge, and other matters, must all be rejected because in patent contradiction to the facts of modern knowledge. I would ask you, however, to suspend judgment until

we have looked at the relation in which these two things, science and the Bible, stand to each other. When science is said to contradict the Bible, I should like to ask first, What is meant by contradiction here? The Bible was never given us in order to anticipate or forestall the discoveries of modern twentieth century science. The Bible, as every sensible interpreter of Scripture has always held, takes the world as it is, not as it is seen through the eyes of twentieth century specialists, but as it lies spread out before the eyes of original men, and uses the popular every-day language appropriate to this standpoint. As Calvin in his commentary on Genesis 1 says: "Moses wrote in the popular style, which, without instruction, all ordinary persons endowed with common sense are able to understand. * * * He does not call us up to heaven; he only proposes things that lie open before our eyes."

It does not follow that because the Bible does not teach modern science, we are justified in saying that it contradicts it. What I see in these narratives of Genesis is that, so true is the standpoint of the author, so divine the illumination with which he is endowed, so unerring his insight into the order of nature, there is little in his description that even yet, with our advanced knowledge, we need to change. You say there is the "six days" and the question whether those days are meant to be measured by the twenty-four hours of the sun's revolution around the earth—I speak of these things popularly. It is difficult to see how they should be so measured when the sun that is to measure them is not introduced until the fourth day. Do not think that this larger reading of the days is a new speculation. You find Augustine in early times declaring that it is hard or altogether impossible to say of what fashion these days are, and Thomas Aquinas, in the middle ages, leaves the matter an open question. To my mind these narratives in Genesis stand out as a marvel, not for its discordance with science, but for *its agreement with it*.

Time does not permit me to enter into the details of the story of man's origin in Genesis, but I have already indicated the general point of view from which I think this narrative is to be regarded. It would be well if those who speak of disagreement with science would look to the great truths embedded in these narratives which science may be called upon to confirm. There is, for example:

(1) The truth that man is the last of God's created works—the crown and summit of God's creation. Does science contradict that?

(2) There is the great truth of the unity of the human race. No ancient people that I know of believed in such unity of the race, and even science until recently cast doubts upon it. How strange to find this great truth of the unity of the mankind confirmed in the pages of the Bible from the very beginning. This truth holds in it already the doctrine of monotheism, for if God is the Creator of the beings from whom the whole race sprang, He is the God of the whole race that sprang from them.

(3) There is the declaration that man was made in God's image—that God breathed into man a spirit akin to His own—does the science of man's nature contradict that, or does it not rather show that in his personal, spiritual nature man stands alone as bearing the image of God on earth, and founds a new kingdom in the world which can only be carried back in its origin to the divine creative cause.

(4) I might cite even the region of man's origin, for I think science increasingly points to this very region in Babylonia as the seat of man's origin. Is it then the picture of the condition in which man was created, pure and unfallen, and the idea that man, when introduced into the world, was not left as an orphaned being—the divine care was about him—that God spake with him and made known His will to him in such forms as he was able to apprehend—is it this that is in contradiction with history? It lies outside the

sphere of science to contradict this. Personally, I do not know of any worthier conception than that which supposes God to have placed Himself in communication with man, in living relations with His moral creatures, from the very first. Certainly there would be contradiction if Darwinian theory had its way and we had to conceive of man as a slow, gradual ascent from the bestial stage, but I am convinced, and have elsewhere sought to show, that genuine science teaches no such doctrine. Evolution is not to be identified offhand with Darwinianism. Later evolutionary theory may rather be described as a revolt against Darwinianism, and leaves the story open to a conception of man quite in harmony with that of the Bible. Of the fall, I have already said that if the story of it were not in the Bible we should require to put it there for ourselves in order to explain the condition of the world as it is.

On the question of patriarchial longevity, I would only say that there is here on the one hand the question of interpretation, for, as the most conservative theologians have come gradually to see, the names in these genealogies are not necessarily to be construed as only individuals. But I would add that I am not disposed to question the tradition of the extraordinary longevity in those olden times. Death, as I understand it, is not a necessary part of man's lot at all. Had man not sinned, he would never have died. Death—the separation of soul and body, the two integral parts of his nature—is something for him abnormal, unnatural. It is not strange, then, that in the earliest period life should have been much longer than it became afterward. Even a physiologist like Weissmann tells us that the problem for science today is—not why organisms live so long, but why they ever die.

I have referred to Babylonian story of the flood, and can only add a word on the alleged contradiction of science on this subject. Very confident statements are often made as to the impossibility of such a submergence of the inhabited

world, and destruction of human and animal life as the Bible represents. It would be well if those who speak thus confidently would study the accumulated evidence which distinguished scientific men have brought forward, that such a catastrophe as Genesis describes is not only possible, but has actually taken place since the advent of man. My attention was first drawn to this subject by an interesting lecture by the late Duke of Argyle given in Glasgow, and the same view has been advocated by other eminent geological specialists on glacial and post-glacial times, as Prestwich, Dawson, Howorth, Dr. Wright, etc. The universal terms employed need not be read as extending beyond the regions inhabited by man. There seems to be no substantial reason for doubting that in the flood of Noah we have an actual historical occurrence of which traditions appear to have survived in most regions of the world.

In conclusion, it is clear that the narratives of Creation, the Fall, the Flood, are not myths, but narratives enshrining the knowledge or memory of real transactions. The creation of the world was certainly not a myth, but a fact, and the representation of the stages of creation dealt likewise with facts. The language used was not that of modern science, but, under divine guidance, the sacred writer gives a broad, general picture which conveys a true idea of the order of the divine working in creation. Man's fall was likewise a tremendous fact, with universal consequences in sin and death to the race. Man's origin can only be explained through an exercise of direct creative activity, whatever subordinate factors evolution may have contributed. The flood was an historical fact, and the preservation of Noah and his family is one of the best and most widely attested of human traditions. In these narratives in Genesis and the facts which they embody are really laid the foundation of all else in the Bible. The unity of revelation binds them up with the Christian Gospel.

CHAPTER VII

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

FROM "SOME RECENT PHASES OF GERMAN THEOLOGY,"*

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Every Old Testament problem becomes in course of time a New Testament question. Every Biblical question places us after a while face to face with Him who is the center of the whole Bible, with Jesus Christ. In the present discussion over the person and Gospel of Jesus Christ, I shall confine myself to pointing out briefly some of the most interesting and important features of this subject.

WAS JESUS A REAL, HISTORICAL PERSON?

In the closing years of the eighteenth century the thought was advanced by a number of rationalistic theologians that the doctrines held by the Church and formulated in her creeds were the joint product of New Testament religion and Greek philosophy. This thought was taken up by Professor Harnack of Berlin, and in his great work, "History of the Christian Doctrine," he disclosed the complicated process by which the Church in developing her doctrines became Hellenized; thus it was made incumbent upon the student of Church history to extricate, by a process of careful analysis and comparison, the genuinely Christian elements from the meshes of foreign thought. Harnack, it is true, applied this principle only to post-apostolic times, but since the appearance of his book investigation has proceeded along the same lines and is now covering the Biblical writings as well.

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Old Testament scholars and Semitists—as Gunkel, Meyer, Meinhold, Gressmann, Winckler, Simmern, Jensen—followed the traces of Babylonian influences down through the period of later Judaism to New Testament times; New Testament scholars—as Schurer, Baldensperger, Bousset, Pfleiderer, Schmiedel, Holtzman, Weinel, Wernle, Wrede—studied Greek and Jewish thought in its influence upon the early Christian writings. They deemed it necessary to eliminate first the whole of Johannine theology as a foreign substance; then they threw overboard the Apostle Paul as the great perverter of the simple teachings of Christ; next they cleared the Synoptical Gospels of all Babylonian, Egyptian, Phrygian, Jewish, Greek and other foreign matter. They have just about finished this arduous work of purifying and simplifying the Gospels by this double process of “religions-geschichtliche” analysis and comparison, in order to discover the real, historical Christ; they meet at the feet of this Christ, to see Him as He really is; but behold, He is no more! Not a trace of Him is left. Trait after trait, feature after feature, has been analyzed and compared, until neither manger nor cross nor grave, not even His garments, are left. A few years ago we had, by the grace of the most advanced scholarship, at least a plain Galilean peasant with a very good heart. Even if His mind was rather too simple, we were allowed to believe in a kind-hearted carpenter’s son, who went about doing good, and to whom at least eight rather inoffensive sayings could be historically traced; as, for example, the saying, “It is more blessed to give than to receive;” but even this peasant has evaporated, or rather, the great Babylonian flood which the mighty Bel caused to drown all mankind has completely swallowed up the little that was left of Jesus of Nazareth.

I beg pardon for this tone of levity. The whole matter would be very serious if it were not so utterly absurd. But the fact is that German theology is just now confronted with

the question, was Jesus Christ a real, historical person, or is He nothing but a literary hero?

From two very different quarters the question as to the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth has been raised. At first blush we may think it is ridiculous to raise the question at all. And so it is. But the very fact that scholars do raise the question and mean to be taken seriously, is the necessary result of tendencies in theology which have been fostered until they have reached this culmination point. This fact will, I trust, open the eyes of many in Germany, and in America as well, who are in the habit of intrusting themselves to the guidance of brilliant and charming leaders without realizing at the start whither they were going.

WAS CHRIST A PRODUCT OF BABYLONIAN MYTHOLOGY?

The first avenue which led to the negation of the historicity of Jesus Christ is the "religionsgeschichtliche" comparison. The religionsgeschichtliche study of the New Testament aims, as Professor Boussett puts it, "to understand the origin and development of Christianity by means of an investigation of the whole environment of primitive Christianity." Applying this principle to the person and work of Christ, Professor Pfeiderer of Berlin, in his "Early Conceptions of Christ," finds that the Christ of the Church has been formed out of those myths and legends which are the common property of religion all over the world.

The elements of the figure are roughly separable into five groups. There is Christ, the Son of God; Christ the Conqueror; Christ the Wonder-worker; Christ the Conqueror of death and the Lifegiver; Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords. The materials for each of these conceptions were taken from various sources. They came from Judaism, from Hellenism, from Mithraism, and the Graeco-Egyptian religion, from Zoroastrianism, and even from Buddhism. They came gradually, and gradually the conception took shape.

The specific contribution of Babylonian mythology to the picture of Christ, as depicted in the Gospels, consists, according to Professor Zimmern, of the following points: (1) "The conception of Christ as a pre-mundane, heavenly, Divine being, who is at the same time the Creator of the world; (2) The accounts of the miraculous birth of Christ, of the homage offered to the new-born child, and of the persecutions; (3) The conception of Christ as the Saviour of the world, and as ushering in a new period of time, appearing as He does in the fullness of time; (4) The conception of Christ as being sent into the world by the Father; (5) The doctrinal aspects of the suffering and death of Christ, apart from the historic facts; (6) The doctrine of the descent of Christ into Hades; (7) The doctrine of the resurrection of Christ on the third day after His death; (8) The doctrine of His ascension after forty days; (9) The doctrine of Christ's glory, sitting at the right hand of God and reigning with the Father; (10) The belief in the coming again of Christ at the end of days in kingly glory, and also of the last conflict with the powers of evil; (11) The idea of the marriage of Christ with His Bride at the beginning of the new time, of the new heaven, and the new earth."

While Professor Zimmern advances these thoughts very carefully and guardedly, Professor Jensen, of the University of Marburg, affirms most positively that the whole life of Christ is essentially a Jewish version of the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epos. His book appeared February, 1907, is a large volume of over one thousand pages, and bears the title, "The Epos of Gilgamesh in the World Literature. The Origins of the Old Testament Patriarch, Prophet, and Redeemer Legends, and of the New Testament Jesus Legend."

The main contention of the book is stated by the author himself in the following words: "That practically all of the Gospel narrative is purely legendary, and that there is no reason at all to consider anything that is told of Jesus as

historical. The Jesus legend is an Israelitish Gilgamesh legend.—As a Gilgamesh legend the Jesus legend is a sister legend to numerous, particularly to most of the Old Testament, legends.” In his concluding chapter Professor Jensen writes: “Jesus of Nazareth, in whom, as in the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, Christianity has believed for nearly two thousands years, and who is regarded, even by the most advanced scholarship of our own day, as a good and great man who lived and died the sublime pattern of the ideal ethical life—this Jesus has never lived upon earth; neither has He died, because He is nothing but an Israelitish Gilgamesh. We, the children of a much lauded time of progress and achievements, we who look down upon the superstitions of the past with a forbearing smile, we worship in our cathedrals and churches, in our meetinghouses and schools, in palaces and shanties, a Babylonian deity.” There was a time when critical analysis of the Biblical texts ran wild. Professor Jensen’s book is comparison run mad.

I should not have taken the time to quote from Jensen, but should have dismissed his book with a forbearing smile, if he were not taken seriously by a number of scholars. To my amazement I noticed that as careful and sane a scholar as Professor Zimmern wrote an extended review of the book, approving it almost without qualification, and saying: “Jensen will hardly succeed at once in seeing his ideas accepted. But truth is not depending upon immediate success, and will in this case, even as in others, be victorious, though not without great trouble, and only slowly. The weight of facts which this book adduces is too immense.”

The other reason why I referred to this book is to show that the logical and unavoidable result of explaining everything distinctively Christian in the Bible by applying the principle of comparison, or, in other words, that the strict and unhampered following of the “*religionsgeschichtliche*” method, as it is in vogue at present, must lead to absurdities.

THE MYTH OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Allow me a digression. I wish to apply these same principles of analysis and comparison to a modern personality, following strictly the methods of Professor Jensen. Suppose Lord Macaulay's famous New Zealander, whom he pictures as standing upon a broken arch of London Bridge, in the midst of a vast solitude, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's should come over to America and dig in the sand-hills covering the Congressional Library in Washington. He finds a great pile of literature which originated in the first few years of the twentieth century. In the very learned book which our New Zealand scholar publishes he refers to the fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century the head of the great American nation was supposed to be a strong and influential man by the name of Theodore Roosevelt. His name has gone down in history, but our scholar proves that Theodore Roosevelt was no historical person at all. He never lived; he is merely the personification of tendencies and mythological traits then dominant in the American nation.

For instance, this legendary hero is commonly pictured with a big stick. Now, this is plainly a mythological trait, borrowed from the Greeks and Romans, and represents really the thunderbolt of Jupiter. He is pictured as wearing a broad brimmed hat and large eye-glasses. This mythological feature is borrowed from old Norse mythology, and represents Woden endeavoring to pierce through the heavy clouds of fog covering his head. A great many pictures show the legendary hero smiling and displaying his teeth. This is a very interesting feature, showing the strong African influences in American civilization. Many contradictory legends are told about this man. He was a great hunter; he was a rough rider; but he was also a scholar and author of a number of learned books. He lived in the mountains, on the prairie, and in a large city. He was a leader in war, but also a peacemaker. It is said that he was appealed to by antagonizing

factions, even by warring nations, to arbitrate. It is self-evident that we have here simply the personification of prominent character traits of the American people at various stages of their historical development. They loved to hunt, to ride, to war; reaching a higher stage of civilization, they turned to studying, writing books, making peace; and all these contradictory traits were, in course of time, used to draw the picture of this legendary national hero. Some mythological features have not yet been fully cleared up; for instance, that he is often represented in the shape of a bear or accompanied by bears. For a while these "Teddy Bears" were in nearly every house, and it seems as if they even were worshipped, at least by the children. There is no doubt that some remote astral conception lies at the root of this rather puzzling feature.

But two reasons are conclusive to establish the legendary thesis: (1) The American nation, at the beginning of the twentieth century, had hardly emerged from the crudity of fetichism and witchcraft. Many traces of fortune-telling, charms, sorcery, and other forms of superstition can be found by studying the daily papers. Even this hero Roosevelt was given to some such superstition. Whenever he desired to bring any one under his spell and charm him, he took him by the hand and pronounced a certain magical word. As far as I can discover it spells something like "dee-lighted." (2) The other conclusive proof is the name. Theodore is taken from the language of a people representing the southern part of Europe and means "Gift of God;" Roosevelt is taken from the language of a people representing the northern part of Europe, and means "Field of Roses." The idea is evident. This hero personifies the union of the two European races which laid the foundations of early American civilization—the Romanic and the Teutonic races; and the Americans imagined that a man who united in himself all those wonderful traits of character must necessarily be a

miraculous "Gift of God," and furthermore they thought that if a man personifying their ideals really had full sway, their country would be changed to a "Field of Roses."

This explanation is strictly scientific. No doubt a good many machine politicians and heads of trusts would be delighted to awake some morning and find out that Theodore Roosevelt is nothing but a mythological figure. But, he is not. He is a living fact and tremendous power in the life of our nation. And so is Jesus Christ.

THE CHRIST OF LIBERAL THEOLOGY

The other avenue which led to the negation of the historicity of Jesus Christ is the well-known modernization and reduction of the life and work of Jesus which liberal theologians have accomplished by means of literary and historical criticism. The history of the critical investigation of the life of Jesus during the last hundred and fifty years is an intensely interesting and instructive study. It has recently been summarized by Dr. A. Schweitzer in his book, "From Reimarus to Wrede." (Reimarus, the contemporary of Lessing, whose "Wolfenbüttele Fragmente" mark the beginning of modern critical research in the life of Christ; Professor William Wrede, who died in November, 1906, was one of the most prominent liberal theologians.) A more popular presentation of the subject, covering the latest phases, is given by Professor Grutzmacher in his booklet, "Is the Liberal Picture of Jesus Modern?"

Without going into the history of this investigation, I merely state that the life of Christ as it is presented now by all liberal theologians—like Harnack, Bousset, Weinel, Wrede, Holtzmann, Julicher, Wernle—as the established result of critical scientific research, is gained, not from an examination of the whole New Testament material, but by means of a complicated process of finding the alleged true sources from which this life may be construed. The oldest por-

tions of the New Testament literature, the Pauline writings, are not to be considered as genuine sources, because, as Professor Wernle states, "Jesus knew nothing of that which to St. Paul is everything. That Jesus regarded Himself as an object of worship must be doubted; that He ascribed any meritorious atonement to His death is altogether improbable. Paul is not a disciple of Jesus. He is a new phenomenon. Paul is much further removed from Jesus in his teaching than he would seem to be when regarded only chronologically."

We turn now to the four Gospels, but of these "the Gospel of John can in no wise be considered a historical source," says Harnack; and he is seconded in this assertion by all liberals. Says Wernle: "St. John must retire in favor of the Synoptic Gospels as source of the life of Christ. Jesus was as the Synoptics represent Him, not as St. John depicts Him." And again: "In the first Gospels there is nothing taught concerning redemption, atonement, regeneration, reception of the Holy Spirit. An altogether different picture is presented by the greater part of the other New Testament writings, especially by the writings of Paul and John."

But even the Synoptic Gospels have to be critically analyzed in order to find the true portrait of Christ. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke, especially in their accounts of the infancy and of the death of Jesus and of the events that took place after His death, and in many other instances as well, are rather a portraiture of the crude beliefs of the early Christian churches than a historically trustworthy account of the real facts. Even in the Gospel of Mark, which is considered the oldest and purest, we find, according to Professor Wernle, that "the historic portrait of Jesus is quite obscured; His person is placed in a grotesquely fantastic light."

Thus analytical criticism is compelled to search for the sources of the Gospels, and it claims to have found princi-

pally two of them; namely, the older Mark document, the source of the present Gospel of St. Mark, and the Logia, or collection of sayings of Jesus, the supposed source of the Gospel of St. Matthew. It is probably true that our present Gospels are based upon previous sources; but, in the absence of fixed data, it is impossible to determine with any degree of certainty just what those sources contained. But critical acumen cannot rest satisfied even with those sources. Says Wernle: "They are not free from the possibility of modification and adulteration. They represent the belief of the Christians as it developed in the course of four decades." It is therefore needful to distinguish between genuine elements and later additions in those sources. This is an exceedingly difficult and delicate task, especially since we do not know, for a certainty, the form nor the substance of those sources. How is it accomplished? We have noted an "inner consciousness" of many textual critics. I am reminded of this when I hear Harnack blandly say: "Whoever has a good eye for the vital and a true sense of the really great must be able to see it, and distinguish between the kernel and the transitory husk;" or when I hear Professor Pfeleiderer speak of "healthy eyes;" or see how Bousset finds the proofs of genuineness in the fact that "it is psychologically comprehensible," or Mehlhorn in the fact that "it could not have been invented." It is with a sense of relief that we read Professor Bousset's refreshingly naive concession that where we find the sources too meager "we may occasionally make use of our imagination."

Unfortunately our imagination is not a safer guide in historical and scientific matters than is our inner consciousness, and the eyesight of no two men is exactly alike. A few years ago there was in Berlin an exhibition of paintings representing scenes from the life of Christ. Hundreds of paintings were exhibited; they were very interesting to look at, but they did not contribute anything to our knowledge of the real ap-

pearance of Jesus Christ. They were nothing but the portraiture of the conceptions which the various artists entertained as to the features of Christ. Each artist portrayed his own ideal of Jesus. Some of the portraits looked so strange that no one would have thought it a picture of Jesus Christ if it had not been labeled as such.

This is precisely the case with all these modern attempts to write a life of Jesus Christ minus St. Paul, minus St. John, minus Matthew, Luke and Mark. If you examine the character of this Jesus closely, you will find that He is really a portraiture of what the author considers his ideal of a pure and holy life, clothed in the garb of an Oriental peasant two thousands years ago.

We cannot here reproduce the details of this twentieth-century ideal in its strange and ancient environments; it is a picture of a man from whom every supernatural, miraculous, mysterious trait has been erased. "Jesus has nowhere overstepped the limits of the purely human," says Bousset; and again: We do no longer start with the thought that Jesus was absolutely different from us; that He was from above, we from below. And consequently we do no longer speak of the divinity of Christ."

Doubts and fears, joys and griefs, moments of ecstasy and of utter dejection, all the changing moods of a poor human heart, may be found in His life. "He was a poor, disquieted man, at times shouting with joy, at times woefully despondent," writes Gustave Frenssen, and adds: "Sometimes He was treading upon the very borderland of exalted insanity."

On the whole, Jesus was the personification of faith in God, brotherly love, and faith in immortality; at times He seems to have taken Himself as the Messiah of His people; in everything He was subject to the limitations of mankind. There is only one difference between this modern view and the old rationalistic view. While the old rationalists, by all sorts of exegetical jugglery, vainly attempted to show that

their human and purely naturalistic view of Jesus was really contained in the New Testament records, the modern rationalists are outspoken in their assertion that their own view is radically different from that of the New Testament writers. They do not in the least try to bridge over this chasm, but state emphatically as Julicher does: "Where even the first apostles have totally misunderstood Jesus we must try to understand Him better."

This is the picture of Christ which the leading liberal theologians of today have scattered broadcast in tens of thousands of copies of cheap pamphlets, which is described Sunday after Sunday in thousands of pulpits both in Germany, and, somewhat modified and as yet retouched, also in America. But again a reaction has set in, the sweep of which can not as yet be wholly comprehended.

THE VERDICT OF INFIDELITY

A pupil of modern liberal theologians, the former pastor Gustav Frenssen, who is a novel-writer of great force, wrote a novel, "Hilligenlei" (Holy Land), of which hundreds of thousands of copies were sold. The hero of this novel, Kai Jans, is, as is generally admitted, a true reproduction of the picture of Christ as painted by the liberal theologians. This book, as well as some other recent publications, gave rise to a number of reviews of the "modern Christ" by eminent literary men and by philosophers who do not claim to be Christians, but are known and desire to be known as leaders of free thought. Some of them were formerly theologians, but have lost their faith in the fundamental truths of Christianity. Of these writers I mention Adolf Bartels, editor of the "Kunstwart," Leo Berg, Eduard von Hartmann, A. Drews, W. Von Schnehen, C. A. Bernoulli, Dr. Kalthoff, the President of the League of Monists, and also two physicians, Doctors De Loosten and E. Rasmussen.

What do these men say? The two physicians claim that the only rational explanation of this Christ is to consider Him as one of the great pathological figures in the world's history; that means, in other words, that He was partially insane. The others say exactly what conservative theologians—as B. Weiss, Ihmels, Kahler, Zahm, Haussleiter, Grutzmacher, Lemme, and others—always have said against this naturalistic representation of Jesus, and what was ignored by liberal theologians. But here are men who were trained in the methods of Pfeleiderer, Bousset, and their kin; men who possess as much critical acumen and philosophic penetration as do the liberal leaders; men whose thinking is in no wise fettered by dogmatic prejudices,—and their almost unanimous verdict is really remarkable.

All of them say that this picture of Christ is both unscientific and unhistorical. It is unscientific, because the methods applied are purely subjective. Says Dr. Kalthoff, after analyzing the Jesus of a number of modern theologians: "Every scholar leaves of the words of Christ only what he can make use of according to his preconceived notions of what is historically possible. Lacking every historical definiteness, the name of Jesus has become an empty vessel into which every theologian pours his own thoughts and ideas."

Eduard von Hartmann shows that the only results which this method of analytical criticism has arrived at are negative results. "The historic Christ remains a problematical figure which is of no religious value at all." W. von Schnehen quotes the liberal Professor Steck, who says: "A strict application of these principles of research will show that there is not one solitary word of Jesus of which we know for certain that it was spoken thus and not otherwise by Jesus," and uses this assertion to prove that all pictures of Christ are admittedly uncertain, and consequently unscientific.

But another argument which is of much greater import is advanced. Kalthoff, von Schnehen, and von Hartmann

reason thus: If the liberal theologians admit that their picture of Christ is different from that which was believed by the Church during all the centuries of her existence—different from that of St. Paul, of St. John, of the Synoptic Gospels, of the sources of the Synoptic Gospels; if, as Professor Pfleiderer says, "Jewish prophecy, rabbinical teachings, Oriental gnosis, and Greek philosophy had already put the colors on the palette from which the picture of Christ was painted in the New Testament writings;" if, as is admitted, the Church was built from the very beginning, not upon the Galilean peasant Jesus, but upon the Christ, the Son of God; and if this Christ is nothing but the creation of speculative theologians, as Paul and John—then there is no need at all of a historic Christ. It is not necessary at all that a man Jesus of Nazareth should ever have lived in order to explain the fact of Christianity.

Even from the point of view of present religious needs of human nature this Jesus of liberal theology is unnecessary. Orthodox theology is Christ-centric; liberal theology is God-centric. "Back to Christ," exclaims Professor Wernle, "but only as a means to return to God the Father. God the Father is to regain that supremacy over our lives which Jesus had intended to give Him, but of which theological dogma has deprived Him." The modern thinkers mentioned above can not see the need of any human mediator between God and man. They want a living, present God, and a constant present communion with Him, if they want a God at all. Neither a Catholic saint nor a dead Jew is to stand between their own lives and God. Says Professor Drews: "The belief in the personal grandeur and the beauty of character of the man Jesus has nothing to do with religion." W. von Schnehen writes still more explicitly: "Even if God should have revealed Himself in the personality of the man Jesus of Nazareth, it is utterly useless to me, unless God reveals Himself to me likewise. If He does reveal Himself to me, then His

revelation to Jesus is of no more import to me than is His revelation to any good man or His revelation in nature. The exemplary moral and religious perfection of Jesus is of no benefit whatever to any one except he has in his being the same moral and religious forces which were in Jesus. But if these powers are inherent in him and can be developed in his life, then it makes no difference by whom they become energized, by Jesus or by some one else."

Quite pathetic are the words of Professor Drews, showing, as they do, the restlessness of an honest but irreligious mind and the dissatisfaction with substitutes in religion: "We are consumed by a burning desire for salvation and we should be satisfied with this fabric of the theologians, this picture of the historic Christ, who changes His features under the hands of every professor of theology who works at it. We need the presence of God, and not His past." And Dr. Kalthoff writes quite correctly: "A God in whom we must believe because scholars say that two thousand years ago the son of a Jewish carpenter believed in Him, is not worth the printer's ink that is being squandered about Him."

THE CHRIST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT THE ONLY CHRIST

I will come to a close. Why have I asked you to read all these quotations? For two reasons: In the first place, I desired to show that the modern method of subjective analysis of the sources and of the "religionsgeschichtliche" comparison leads, and as a matter of fact did lead, to a complete negation of the historicity of the person of Christ. In the second place, I wished to point out that the modern, liberal conception of Christ, which strips Him of all distinctively divine elements and makes a pure man of Him, be He ever so good and holy, be He ever so sublime a pattern of a perfect life, be He ever so trustworthy a guide to God, does not and can not satisfy the modern man. He repudiates this man-made Jesus, and even accuses his makers of lack of scientific spirit and of

dishonesty. Says von Schnehen: "Christianity is not belief in the man Jesus, but faith in Christ the Saviour and Son of God. Not the man Jesus, the lovable preacher and teacher of morals, who did not shrink back from death in obedience to what was His conviction, has conquered the world, but Christ the Son of God, who died upon the cross in order to redeem a lost world. This is the Christ of the Gospels and of the Church. It is dishonest to call this modern view of Jesus and of His religion Christian or evangelical."

It has ever been the mistake of rationalism to try to make Christianity acceptable to the average man by taking off the edges of its supranaturalism. It has ever been a failure, and ever will be so. The testimonies of these modern men show that the portrait of Christ painted by liberal theologians of our own day is an utter failure. They prove that the modern man, as well as man centuries ago, needs and wants exactly the Christ of the Church and the Gospels or no Christ at all.

The only true, historically and scientifically true, picture of the life and work and Gospel of Christ is the one which is given in the New Testament as a whole. The modern historians and philosophers tell the modern liberal theologians in very plain language to be honest and quit calling themselves preachers of the Gospel of Christ if they do not believe in the Christ of the Gospels, and quit calling their congregations churches of Christ if they do not believe in the Christ of the Church. Modern man is opposed to all shams and insincerities. He has no patience with men who, while using the old phraseology, cleverly substitute their self-made Jesus for the God-given Christ. The Christ can not be changed. He is the same yesterday, today and forevermore.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

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There are many indications of a revival of interest in the study of eschatology. The latest attack upon the Christian faith is being directed against the eschatological teaching of the New Testament. The Christian Church was founded upon the promise of a speedy return of Christ to establish His Kingdom in the world, but its history has taken an entirely different course. The expectation of the early Christians was not fulfilled. The teaching of the apostles has been falsified. Such is the argument that is now being used in some quarters to discredit the founders of Christianity. This is compelling Christian scholars to give renewed attention to the teaching of the new Testament about the Lord's second coming, and will doubtless lead to more earnest and thorough examination of the whole outlook of Christ and His apostles upon the future.

It is acknowledged that the eschatology of the New Testament is not the eschatology of the Church today. The hope of the early Christians is not the hope of the average Christian now. It has become our habit to think of the change which comes at death, or our entrance into heaven, as the crowning point in the believer's life, and the proper object of our hope. Yet the apostles never speak of death as something which the Christian should look forward to or prepare for. They do not ignore death altogether, nor do they cast a halo about it. It is always an enemy, the last enemy that is to be destroyed. But they do not take account of it at all in the scheme of things with which we have now to reckon.

As a matter of fact the early Christians were taught that they had died already—"Ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3, R. V.).

Nor is heaven set forth as the Christian's hope. The New Testament represents the Church as in heaven already. We have been raised up with Christ and made to sit with Him in the heavenly places. (Eph. 2:6.) Our warfare is carried on against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Eph. 6:12.) Our citizenship is there. (Phil. 3:20.) Browning's conception of the experience of Lazarus when he came back from the tomb:

"Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,
Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing heaven,"

is almost precisely the apostolic representation of the believer's life upon earth. It is potentially a life in heaven. Neither death nor heaven, then, can be the Church's hope, for, in their essential relation to the Christian life, death lies in the past and heaven in the present.

The conversion of the world is not the object of the Church's hope. It is quite true that this glorious consummation lies in the future, for "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," but the task of bringing this about was not committed to the Church. On the contrary, the New Testament descriptions of the last days of the Church upon earth preclude the thought. They are depicted in dark colors. (2 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Pet. 3:1-4.) The history of the preaching of the Gospel in the world should be enough to show that this cannot be the object set before us, for, while whole nations have been evangelized, not a single community has ever been completely converted. It is a striking fact that the apostles had nothing to say about the conversion of the world. While they were busy preaching the Gospel in the world they gave no indication that they expected this work to result at length in the transformation of the world. They were not looking for a change in the

world, but for the personal presence of their Lord. Jesus Christ Himself was their hope, and His appearing they intensely loved and longed for.

The attitude of the New Testament Church is represented by the Apostle John in the closing words of the Apocalypse. Visions of heavenly glory and millennial peace have passed before him. He has seen the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the Holy City, New Jerusalem, whose light was like a stone most precious. But, at the end of it all, the longing of the aged apostle is not for these things to come. Greater than all these glories, dearer than all these dear things, is the Master Himself, and the prayer that rises from his heart as he closes his wondrous book is simply, "Come, Lord Jesus."

The hope of the Church, then, is *the Personal Return of her Lord*. As Dr. David Brown stated it in his book on the Second Advent, sixty years ago, "the Redeemer's second appearing is the very pole-star of the Church." Let us see how this hope lies upon the pages of the New Testament revelation, and how it influenced the life of the New Testament Church.

1. *Christ taught His disciples to expect His return.* This was the last of the stages through which His teaching about Himself advanced. In the early part of His ministry He seems to have kept His personality in the background; He forbade those whom He healed to tell about Him. Then there came a time when He asked the disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" and led them to think of His divine origin. After that He began to instruct them about His approaching death and resurrection, "His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31). In the last days of His ministry His return to the world largely occupied His own thoughts, and He kept it prominently before the minds of His disciples. During His last journey to Jerusalem He foreshadowed His own history in the parable of the nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom and return, who

left His servants behind with the command, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:12, 13). One evening during the last week He sat on the Mount of Olives, looking down no doubt upon the massive buildings of the temple, the total destruction of which He had just foretold. The disciples gathered about Him with the request: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3). It is evident from the form of this question that His coming was no new thought to them. It was occupying their minds already. They knew that He was coming again, and they wished to know how to recognize the approach of that event. In answer to the question, the Lord unfolded a panorama of intervening history, and emphasized the need of watchfulness because the time of His coming would be uncertain. "Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. Therefore be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh." He enforced this teaching with two striking illustrations of the twofold kind of preparation needed on the part of the disciples, the inward preparation of spiritual life set forth in the parable of the virgins, and the outward preparation of diligent service in that of the talents. Then He closed His discourse with a graphic picture of the changed conditions in which He would appear when He came the second time as the Son of Man sitting upon the throne of His glory.

Through the sad and dark hours of the very last night His thoughts were occupied with His return. In the upper room, when the faithful little band were grouped about Him in sorrow for the parting which all vaguely felt was near, He began His farewell words to them with this comforting assurance: "Let not your hearts be troubled. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go * * * I will come again" (John 14:1-3). A few hours afterwards He was in the midst of the shameful scenes of His trial. Mark His answer to

the high priest, when He calmly acknowledged the claim to be the Christ, the Son of God: "Nevertheless, I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 24:64). He did not look like the Messiah at that moment as He stood there with bound hands before His accusers. His appearance seemed to belie His words. But the time would come when they would see that His claim was true. This was what was in His thoughts. Through all the shame of those awful hours, the vision of His return in glory to the world that was rejecting Him now shone like a beacon upon His soul; and "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame."

At His ascension the same truth was brought again to the minds of the disciples. As they stood gazing in wonder towards the place where the Lord had disappeared from their view, the two angels were sent to remind them of His return. "This same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). It was this thought that sent the disciples back to Jerusalem with the joy which Luke describes in the closing verses of his Gospel. It is very clear, therefore, that when Jesus departed from this world after His first coming He left His disciples radiant with the joyful assurance of His coming again.

2. *The apostles taught their converts to wait for the coming of the Lord.* All the New Testament churches have the expectant attitude. No matter in what part of the world or in what stage of development they are found, they have this characteristic in common. The conversion of the Thessalonians is described as "turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to *wait* for His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). The Corinthians "come behind in no gift, *waiting* for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7). To the Galatians Paul writes, "We through

the Spirit by faith *wait* for the hope of righteousness" (Gal. 5:5); and to the Philippians, "Our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we *wait* for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). In the Epistle to the Hebrews the same attitude is disclosed, for there we read: "Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that *wait* for Him, unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). It is evident that the early Christians not only looked back to a Saviour who had died for them, but forward to a Saviour who was to come. There were two poles in their conversion. Their faith was anchored in the past in the facts of the death and resurrection of the Lord, and also in the future in the assured hope of His return. It is manifest, therefore, that the second coming of the Saviour occupied a most important place in the Gospel which the apostles preached, and which these Christians received.

3. *The whole life and work of the New Testament Church has the coming of the Lord in view.* All the lines of her activity and experience lead to this event. The sanctification of the disciple is a preparation for the coming of the Lord. Paul writes to the Thessalonians: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23). John puts the same thing in his own tender way: "And now, little children, abide in Him, that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28). Christian service gets its encouragement in the same inspiring issue. Paul exhorts Timothy to fidelity, charging him to "keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 6:14). And Peter writes to his fellow elders: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:2, 4). The patience of the early Christians in suf-

fering and trial is bounded by the same event. "Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand" (Jas. 5: 7, 8). "Let your forbearance be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). Their life of fellowship and brotherly love reaches its holy consummation at the Lord's return. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you, to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Thess. 3:12, 13). Their acts of worship, as for example, their observance of the Lord's supper, have the same end in view. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Thus, whatever aspect of the Church's life and work we consider, we find it to be a stream which moves on towards one glorious future. The appearing of the Lord Jesus Himself fills the whole horizon.

4. *The New Testament grace of hope rests upon the coming of the Lord.* This word is emptied today of much of the meaning it had among the early Christians. It has come to be a vague and misty thing, the general habit of expecting things somehow to turn out well. Their hope was no such shallow optimism. It was the light that shone from that one glad coming event, casting its sacred glow over all their lives. Paul sums up the true Christian attitude in these words: "The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:11-13).

The word *hope* was often upon the lips of the apostles. It is used more than a score of times in the epistles in direct

connection with the coming of the Lord. It is not unlikely that, even when it is used alone without any qualifying phrase, as in the expressions, "We are saved by hope," "rejoicing in hope," it has the same specific reference. The Epistle to the Hebrews makes frequent use of the word in this way. There was a special reason for this. The Hebrew Christians were a small and despised community, living under the continual influence of that majestic ritual which was still going on in the temple at Jerusalem. The return of Christ was delayed, and there was a strong tendency to slip back into the old ceremonial system. Their patience and hope had need of every encouragement. The writer of the epistle turns their eyes again and again from the shadows of the past to the realities that lay before them. Their Messiah had indeed come to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, but He would come a second time, in glory, with a final and complete salvation. This was the hope set before them to which they had fled for refuge. (Heb. 6:18.) Let them hold fast their boldness and the glorying of their hope firm unto the end. (Heb. 3:6.)

In a beautiful passage in his first epistle, the apostle John points out the practical value of this Christian grace in its essential relation to the coming of the Lord: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John 3:2, 3).

5. *Redemption is not complete until the second coming of the Lord.* The apostles think of salvation in three different ways; sometimes with reference to the past, as a fact already assured at the moment of belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; sometimes with reference to the present, as a process still going on; and sometimes with reference to the future, as an act yet to be accomplished. In this last sense Paul uses

the word when he says, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed" (Rom. 13:11); and Peter also, in the phrase, "kept by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:5). Our Lord refers to the same thing when, after telling the disciples about the signs of His coming, He adds, "When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). One of the most complete types of the history of redemption is to be found in the ceremonies of the day of atonement. It was an essential part of the work of the high priest on that day that he should come forth from within the veil, and laying aside his linen garments, reappear to bless the waiting congregation. Our great High Priest is now within the veil. He has offered the atoning sacrifice on the altar of Calvary, and with the merit of that sacrifice He has gone in to appear in the presence of God for us. But the great day of atonement is not yet closed. When His work within the veil is ended, He shall come forth, arrayed again in His garments of glory and beauty, for the final blessing of His waiting people. "Having been once offered to bear the sins of many, He shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation."

Think of what this crowning act of redemption will mean for the Redeemer Himself, when, attended with heavenly glory, He prepares to descend to the very world that witnessed His suffering, sorrow, and shame. What will it mean to Him when the multitudes of the redeemed gather about Him, and at last He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied? Is it not reasonable that there should be such a manifestation of the Redeemer to the world? Is it reasonable that the despised Man of Nazareth should be the only view the world should have of Him Who is to be the Heir of all things? Is it likely that God would allow His Son's retirement from the world in apparent defeat without any subsequent vindication?

If the prophetic vision of the suffering Servant had an actual personal fulfillment, surely the prophetic vision of the conquering King will also have a personal fulfillment. As the world was astonished at Him when He came the first time, because "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men," so it will be astonished when He comes a second time, and the prophet's vision breaks upon its view: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that is glorious in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength?" (Isa. 63:1.)

And what will it mean for the redeemed? There will be, of course, the happy reunion of all the saints when the dead are raised and the living are changed, for, when the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, "the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we that are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." But glorious as these things are, they are only preliminary steps to a higher and holier bliss. The climax of redemption will be the manifested union of the Church with her Lord in the marriage of the Lamb. For then the Bridegroom shall come to claim His Bride, and take her to share His glory and His throne. Then the Church that Christ loved and purchased shall be presented to Him a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Then the astonished world, beholding her transformation, shall cry, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning on her Beloved?" Think of what it will mean when, after sharing His humiliation in the midst of a scoffing and unbelieving world, the redeemed Church is exalted to His side, and, as the consort of the King of kings and Lord of lords, stands "all rapture through and through in God's most holy sight." Nothing less than this is the destiny that awaits the Church of Jesus Christ.

If the Lord committed to His disciples the promise of His personal return, and if it occupied so large a place in the

lives of the early Christians, surely it is unfair to banish it from the Church today. It is unfair to the world, for this truth is part of the Gospel which should be delivered to the world. It is unfair to the Church, for it deprives the people of Christ of one of the most powerful motives for spiritual life and service. It is unfair to Christ Himself, for it obscures the reality of His personal presence within the heavenly veil and substitutes for it the thin air of a mere spiritual influence.

The hope of the second coming of our Lord has an important bearing upon Christian life and doctrine. It has a vital relation especially to some points of our faith which are being attacked or obscured by the subtle tendencies of modern thought.

1. *It is bound up with belief in the supreme and infallible authority of the Holy Scriptures.* It would never be adopted on rationalistic grounds. Those who receive it rest their belief wholly on the authority of Scripture, believing that therein God has spoken in a way that can be trusted. They accept the Bible as the record of God's revelation to man, and believe that in prophecy He has disclosed His purpose concerning the future of the world. It is a protest against the tendency within the Church to exalt the human reason above the Word of God, and to reduce inspired prophecy to the level of merely human foresight.

2. *It bears testimony to the presence of God in human history.* The tendency of our times is to explain away the supernatural element in history whether in the past, the present, or the future. To this tendency those who accept the doctrine of the second coming refuse to yield. The history of the world is controlled by God; His hand is on the affairs of men. In the person of Jesus Christ He has already supernaturally intervened in the course of human history. It is believed, on the authority of His Word, that He will super-

naturally intervene again. The first coming of Christ was a descent of God into the life of the human race. The Scriptures teach us to expect another divine descent, not to bring history to a close, but to introduce new forces and to inaugurate a new dispensation.

3. *It exalts the divine person and work of the incarnate Son of God.* It is in direct opposition to the Unitarian tendencies which pervade so large a part of modern religious thought. It holds the truth of the Lord's continued existence in a glorified body, and regards this fact as of primary importance and of prophetic significance. The personal existence of the risen Son of Man is not to be dissolved away into a mere general spiritual presence. The risen and ascended Redeemer exists today in heaven in the true reality of His glorified humanity; and "this same Jesus," it is believed, shall be revealed one day in His glorious personality from behind the unseen veil, to carry on the redemption of the world to its full completion.

4. *It takes due account of the fall of the human race.* The tendency today is greatly to exalt man and to ignore the fact of the fall. The great advance that is being made in every department of human knowledge and activity predisposes men to form the highest conceptions of the possibilities of the race. The theory of evolution, which dominates modern thinking, leads men to expect a gradual perfecting of the race under the laws of its own being, which will issue at last, with the beneficent aid of Christianity, in a perfect state of human society and the redemption of the race as a whole. But human sin is too deep-rooted and too widespread for the attainment of this end in the present order of things, even with the aid of existing spiritual agencies. It is acknowledged to be the teaching of Scripture that, even with the aid of divine grace, the triumph of the kingdom of God in the individual is not complete in the present order, but only at his translation to a higher order at the resurrection. It would seem that the analogy should

hold as regards the race, and that the triumph of the kingdom in the race as an organic unity will be brought about only by a supernatural intervention of divine power and the introduction of humanity into a new order of things.

5. *It presents a sublime view of God's great purpose in His creation.* It places the redemption of the whole world, the restoration of all things, in the very forefront of the divine purpose regarding fallen man. Everything has been arranged and foreordained by God to this end. This is the divine event to which the whole creation moves. He who has this hope has a large vision, a vision not limited to the present day and its affairs. He sees the will of God moving on through the history of the ages. The present age is but preparatory. A grander age is to be ushered in by the advent of the victorious Redeemer, an age in which man shall come to his own at last, and creation shall be restored to its harmony, under its true Head, the glorified Son of Man.

6. *It provides the most inspiring motive for Christian life and service.* It is a supremely practical hope. The repeated instructions of the Lord and His apostles to be ready for His return indicate the force this doctrine had as a motive in the lives of the early Christians. The great leaders who have left their impress on the history of the Church did not discard this doctrine, but made it a real hope in their own lives. Martin Luther, in the midst of the throes of the Reformation, wrote, "I ardently hope that, amidst these internal dissensions on the earth, Jesus Christ will hasten the day of His coming." The acute and learned Calvin saw that this was the Church's true hope. "We must hunger after Christ," he said, "till the dawning of that great day when our Lord will fully manifest the glory of His kingdom. The whole family of the faithful will keep in view that day." The intrepid soul of John Knox was nerved by this hope. In a letter to his friends in England he wrote: "Has not the Lord Jesus, in despite of Satan's malice, carried up our flesh into heaven?"

And shall He not return? We know that He shall return, and that with expedition." John Wesley believed this same truth, as is shown by his comment on the closing verses of Revelation: "The spirit of adoption in the bride in the heart of every true believer says, with earnest desire and expectation, 'Come and accomplish all the words of this prophecy.'" It formed the burden of Milton's sublime supplication: "Come forth out of Thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth; put on the visible robes of Thy imperial majesty; take up that unlimited scepter which Thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed Thee. For now the voice of Thy bride calls Thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed." It was the ardent longing of the seraphic Rutherford: "Oh, that Christ would remove the covering, draw aside the curtains of time, and come down. Oh, that the shadows and the night were gone." It was the prayer of Richard Baxter in the "Saints' Everlasting Rest:" "Hasten, O my Saviour, the time of Thy return. Send forth Thine angels and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound. Thy desolate Bride saith come. The whole creation saith come. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." And if we would follow in the steps of these men, we will return to the simple, unmistakable New Testament type of experience, and, with faces uplifted towards the veil, within which the Lord of glory waits, and with hearts all aglow with a personal love for Him, we will carry on through all our life and service the same apostolic prayer.

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